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Fisher Ames

WORKS

OF

FISHER AMES.

WITH A

SELECTION FROM HIS SPEECHES

AND

CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

SETH AMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.

1854.

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PREFACE.

THE Editor of these volumes has for some time past had it in contemplation to publish a second edition of his father's writings. The collection originally published in 1809 has long been out of print, and it was hoped that a second edition might be acceptable. Like many other resolutions intended to be carried into effect at some more convenient season, this project has slumbered, and perhaps has been in some danger of a general and indefinite postponement. A few months ago, however, it was his good fortune to receive, from a friend in Boston, a large number of original letters to the late Governor Gore, and they were found, on examination, sufficiently interesting and important to change the half-forgotten purpose into a somewhat urgent and imperative duty. Further inquiries were made in appropriate quarters, and those inquiries have been so kindly received and so faithfully seconded, that it soon became manifest that the original letters, placed at the disposal of the editor, would require that his proposed republication should be, to a considerable extent, a new and a different work. It has been found more convenient to devote the second volume of the present work to the speeches and essays published in 1809. They will be found in that

volume with a slight change of arrangement, and with the omission of one essay, entitled "Sketches of the State of Europe," which is now ascertained to have been the work of another author.

The editor flatters himself that the new volume, containing a collection of his father's letters to his political and personal friends, will be found to be a valuable addition to the original work. It is well known that Fisher Ames was considered by his contemporaries quite as remarkable for his colloquial gifts, as for the eloquence and vigor of his public speeches and written essays. His letters were very numerous, and generally as unpremeditated as his spoken words. They approach, in some degree, to the energy and vivacity of his conversation, and partially supply the want of those personal memorials which have unfortunately perished. He kept no letter-book, and, with only three or four exceptions, no copies of any of his letters, and undoubtedly a large portion of them is irrecoverably lost. None of them appear to have been written with any view to publication, and only two or three seem to have been intended to go beyond the persons to whom they were immediately addressed. Some of them were of an exceedingly delicate and confidential character, and some were accompanied with an injunction that they should be committed to the flames. But the reasons for privacy have long since ceased to exist, and there is nothing in the whole correspondence that will not bear the light of publicity. In some instances names have been suppressed; and occasionally a paragraph has been omitted, which might give annoyance or uneasiness in some quarters if imparted to the public at large. In the letters to his brother-in-law, Thomas Dwight of Springfield, there are of course many domestic details, too trivial and minute to be of any public interest, which are for that reason

omitted. No letters to his excellent and most intimate friend, George Cabot, are contained in this collection, because none could be found. Whatever written correspondence may have passed between them has disappeared, and is lost. The letters to Oliver Wolcott, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury under Washington and Adams, published in Gibbs's History of the Federal Administrations, are omitted, because Mr. Gibbs's absence from this part of the country has rendered it inconvenient to obtain that gentleman's express consent to their republication here.

The editor hardly considers it necessary to apologize for not attempting to connect these letters together by a thread of biographical narrative. He was but three years of age at the time of his father's death, and he has absolutely no materials for such a narrative, except such as are furnished by the letters themselves, and the public history of the country. He may be pardoned also for saying that he cannot remember a time when he did not feel entirely satisfied with the beautiful and touching memoir by the late Dr. Kirkland. The most that he has attempted to do has been so to arrange the letters as to make the writer of them tell his own story, and act as his own biographer. For this reason, a few are included which are important only as furnishing some matter of fact, or going into some detail as to his daily life and occupation, which may not be found in Dr. Kirkland's brief and general sketch.

The correspondence will be found to present the unstudied outpourings of a singularly impulsive and ardent temperament. Sometimes, of course, it is deeply colored with the despondency growing out of habitual ill-health; at other times the writer's gayety and good spirits are too great even for sickness wholly to subdue; and sometimes he suffers himself to be betrayed into expressions which his more

deliberate judgment would probably have led him to qualify. The entire series will be found to present as honest an account of his own opinions and impulses for the time being, and as faithful a portrait of himself, as any man ever drew. It is hoped that it will be found valuable and interesting, not only as the history of a leader in the Federal party from its origin, but as a contemporaneous record, by an eye-witness, of a portion of our political history, once very generally neglected, now exciting more of curiosity and interest, but not even yet generally understood. The Federal party has long since ceased to exist, "except in the pages of history," and, for that very reason, the public is in a good position to inquire, without prejudice or passion, what sort of men the early Federalists were, what were their views of public affairs, and in what manner they fought the political battle of their day and generation.

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LIFE.

Mr. Ames was distinguished among the eminent men of our country. All admitted, for they felt, his extraordinary powers; few pretended to doubt, if any seemed to deny, the purity of his heart. His exemplary life commanded respect; the charms of his conversation and manners won affection. He was equally admired and beloved.

His public career was short, but brilliant. Called into the service of his country in seasons of her most critical emergency, and partaking in the management of her councils during a most interesting period of her history, he obtained a place in the first rank of her statesmen, legislators, orators, and patriots. By a powerful and original genius, an impressive and uniform virtue, he succeeded, as fully perhaps as any political character, in a republic agitated by divisions, ever did, in surmounting the two pernicious vices, designated by the inimitable biographer of Agricola, insensibility to merit on the one hand, and envy on the other.

Becoming a private citizen, he still operated extensively upon the public opinion and feeling, by conversation and writing. When least in the public eye, he remained the object of enthusiastic regard to his friends, and of fond reliance and hope to those lovers of his country who discern the

connection between the agency of a few and the welfare of the many; whilst in the breasts of the community at large he engaged a sentiment of lively tenderness and peculiar respect.

The sickness, which diffused an oppressive languor upon his best years, was felt to be a common misfortune; and the news of his death, though not unexpected, gave a pang of distress to the hearts of thousands. Those inhabitants of the capital of Massachusetts who had always delighted to honor him, solicited his lifeless remains for the privilege of indulging their grief, and evincing their admiration by funeral obsequies. The sad rites being performed, those who had cherished his character and talents with such constant regard and veneration, and who felt their own and the public loss in his death with poignant affliction, demanded a publication of his works. They urged, that it would gratify their affection, reflect honor on his name, and be a voice of instruction and warning to his country.

In compliance with their general and earnest wish, this volume is given to the world. Some account of the author's life and character is thought due, if not to his fame, yet to the interest which all have in those "who were born, and who have acted, as though they were born for their country and for mankind."

He needs not our praises; he would be dishonored by our flattery; but he was our distinguished benefactor. We owe a record of this kind, though imperfectly executed, to our sense of his merits and services, and to our gratitude to heaven who endues some with extraordinary gifts to be employed for the benefit of others. It is the part of justice to afford, to those who desire it, all practicable lights to guide their judgment of an eminent man, living in times and acting in situations, which expose his character to be imperfectly understood. We must pay respect to that natural and laudable curiosity of mankind, which asks an explanation of the causes that may have contributed to form any peculiar excellence in one of our species, and which takes an interest in the circumstances and events of his life. Examples of great talents diligently exerted, and of shining virtues practised with uniformity, should be preserved and displayed, as furnishing

models in conduct and incentives to excellence. By such exhibitions, the timid are encouraged and the inactive roused. Emulation fires generous spirits to endeavor to fill the void made by the loss of the eminent. Are any capable of doing great and durable good to their country and the world, they are stimulated to tread in the fair paths which have been trodden before; and those whom nature and circumstances have confined to a small compass of action, are instructed to place their single talent to the best account.

Fisher Ames lived and died in his native place. He was born April 9, 1758, in the old parish of Dedham, a pleasant country town about nine miles south of Boston, and the shire town of Norfolk. He sprung from one of the oldest families in Massachusetts. In the line of his ancestry is the Rev. William Ames, a famous English divine, author of the Medulla Theologiæ and several controversial tracts. He was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, and to prevent an expulsion in form, on account of his strenuous assertion of Calvinistical principles, he forsook this college, went abroad, and was chosen, by the States of Friesland, professor of their university. He was at the synod of Dort, 1618. He had determined to emigrate to New England, but was prevented by death in November, 1633.

The father of Fisher Ames was a physician and the son of a physician who lived in Bridgewater. His mother was daughter of Jeremiah Fisher, Esq., one of the most respectable farmers in the county. Dr. Nathaniel Ames was a man of acuteness and wit, of great activity, and of a cheerful and amiable temper. To his skill in his profession he added a knowledge of natural philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics. He died in July, 1764, leaving four sons and one daughter.

Fisher was the youngest child. The mother, as if "anticipating the future lustre of the jewel committed to her care," early resolved to struggle with her narrow circumstances in order to give this son a literary education; and she has lived to see his eminence and prosperity, to receive the expressions of his filial piety, and to weep over his grave.

It has been observed, that those who are prodigies of infant genius, often disappoint the expectations they have raised,

whilst minds of no peculiar promise, and even of tardy growth in early years, have been known at length to bear vigorous and lasting fruit. On the other hand, it cannot be denied, that a great portion of those who display extraordinary powers in mature life, give indications of decided superiority in youth. The accounts of Mr. Ames prove the early expansion of his faculties. When he was six years old, he began the study of Latin. From this time till he entered the university he had a variety of instructors in succession. He attended the town school, when the master happened to be capable of teaching him, and at other times recited his lessons to the Rev. Mr. Haven, minister of the parish, a gentleman to whom he always showed much respect and friendship.

His frequent change of instructors and desultory application to the languages were obvious disadvantages attending his initiation in classical literature. He did not receive that exact and sedulous culture, which such a mind as his deserved, and would have fully repaid. His native energies in a good degree supplied these defects, and carried him forward in the road of improvement. In July, 1770, soon after the completion of his twelfth year, he was admitted to Harvard College. Previous to his being offered, he was examined by a gentleman appointed to teach the languages, who expressed admiration of his quickness and accuracy, and pronounced him a youth of uncommon attainments, and bright promise.

During this period he was remarkable for close application in the hours of study, and for animation and gayety in the intervals of relaxation. He entered the university, indeed, at too tender an age for the mind to grasp the abstract sciences. It is said, however, that in the literary exercises in general he was ready and accurate, and in particular branches distinguished. He very soon gained the reputation of shining parts. He was attentive to his studies, and regular in his conduct. Young as he was, he did not abuse his power over that portion of his time which the laws of the institution submit to the discretion of the student, by idleness and trifling; nor his liberty of self-direction in the choice of his associates, by consorting with the vicious. At that early period, he might say, as he did when he came into life: "I

have never sought friends, whom I was not willing and desirous to be known to have."

It was not his fancy or his passion to break through the fences of discipline, or come into collision with the authority of his preceptors. He had a good standing with the government of the college, without losing any part of the friendship and esteem of his fellow-students. His tutors were accustomed to speak of his qualities with emphatic praise. There was a peculiar mildness and modesty in the character of young Ames, joined to a vivacity and pleasantness, that endeared him both to his superiors and equals.

He was a favorite in a society then recently formed among the students for improvement in elocution. It was early observed, that he coveted the glory of eloquence. In his declamation before this society, he was remarked for the energy and propriety with which he delivered such specimens of impassioned oratory as his genius led him to select. As a task or voluntary trial of his skill, he produced occasionally a theme or oration, and was known sometimes to invoke the muse of poetry, though he affected then, as he did afterwards, to decline the reputation of a poetic talent. Probably he was never satisfied with the success of his attempts in an art, in which want of excellence is want of every thing. His compositions at this time bore the characteristic stamp which has always marked his speaking and writing. They were sententious and full of ornament.

It is especially to be told, that the morals of the young collegian passed the ordeal of a four years' residence at the university unhurt. He surmounted the temptations to vice, perhaps inseparable from the place, and left it with an unsullied purity of sentiments and manners.

Those who perceive the intimate dependence of one part of life on another, and the infinite consequences of early impressions and habits, will discern the auspicious influence of his blameless youth upon his subsequent character and fortunes. They will ask, by what means he walked erect in a way where many stumble and fall, and kept the treasure of his innocence in a region where the spoiler, in the form of seductive example, perverted sentiment, and unhallowed passion so often assaults it with success.

Fact unhappily demonstrates, that, in spite of what instruction or discipline can do to check the cause or control the effects of youthful errors and passions, the college life is a severe experiment upon the strength of juvenile virtue. That degree of liberty, which is the necessary privilege of young men in a course of liberal education, is also the source of their imminent peril. In the instance of the subject of this notice, his tender age and his limited pecuniary means undoubtedly formed an important security against the worst excesses incident to the situation. But these accidental circumstances are far from insuring adequate sobriety and self-restraint, especially in those of ardent minds and highly excitable feelings. Happy dispositions and early good principles in a young man entering upon this doubtful course, are essential pledges of his safety. In such a one the vivacity of his mind and imagination, his lively spirits and warm affections are directed to objects that are laudable or safe: he is drawn to his literary pursuits by the allurement of pleasure, and places the point of honor in acting well his part. His taste is manly and just; he does not miscall dissipation, enjoyment, nor revelry, mirth; he has begun to take counsel from prudence, and to send his thoughts beyond the present moment. He has not been instructed in vain to ask himself for a reason of his conduct, to act by plan, and to look to the end. He has listened with solemnity to the injunction to beware of the first step in the path of evil. He has some comprehension of the hazard of a first deviation, the presumption of timid liberties and dubious actions. That young man who answers to this description will, no doubt, resist both the terror and the charm that make his discretion and virtue difficult. Such was Mr. Ames, through his college life, and, indeed, all that period when the most durable impressions are received, and the moral bias is generally contracted. Happily, he did not need the smart of guilt to make him virtuous, nor the regret of folly to make him wise. He seems to have been early initiated in that caution and self-distrust, which he used afterwards to inculcate. He was accustomed to say, "We have but a slender hold of our virtues; they ought, therefore, to be cherished with care, and practised with diligence. He who holds parley with vice and dis-

honor, is sure to become their slave and victim. The heart is more than half corrupted, that does not burn with indignation at the slightest attempt to seduce it."

His spotless youth brought blessings to the whole remainder of his life. It gave him the entire use of his faculties, and all the fruit of his literary education. Its effects appeared in that fine edge of moral feeling which he always preserved; in his strict and often austere temperance; in his love of occupation, that made activity delight; in his distaste for public diversions, and his preference of simple pleasures. Beginning well, he advanced with unremitted steps in the race of virtue, and arrived at the end of life with peace and honor.

His parent had early directed his views to the study of law. Even before he entered college, and while there, he had spoken of a profession, and sometimes mentioned divinity or medicine; but she had always aimed to determine his choice to the law, which he adopted as his destined pursuit.

After receiving his degree in 1774, several years passed away before he entered on his professional studies. The straitened situation of his mother, obliged to provide for her other children, the doubtful and troubled aspect of the times, joined to the immaturity of his years, occasioned this delay of his proper occupation. During a part of this interval, he had recourse to that employment, which the school establishments of New England offer to young men of literary education and limited means of support, and which has been the first resort, after leaving college, of many of our distinguished men in all professions.

This period, however, which engaged his services to the community, was not lost to himself. He improved his leisure by indulging his favorite propensity to books. During this time, as he frequently said, he read with avidity, bordering on enthusiasm, almost every author within his reach. He revised the Latin classics, which he had studied at college. He read works illustrating Greek and Roman antiquities, and the mythology of the ancients, natural and civil history, and some of the best novels. Poetry was both his food and luxury. He read the principal English poets, and became familiar with Milton and Shakspeare, dwelt on their beau-

ties, and fixed passages of peculiar excellence in his memory. He had a high relish of the works of Virgil, and at this time could repeat considerable portions of the Eclogues and Georgics, and most of the splendid and touching passages of the Æneid. This multifarious, though, for want of a guide, indiscriminate, and probably, in some instances, ill-directed reading, must have contributed to extend and enrich the mind of the young student. It helped to supply that fund of materials for speaking and writing which he possessed in singular abundance; and hence, partly, he derived his remarkable fertility of allusion, his ability to evolve a train of imagery adapted to every subject of which he treated.

Mr. Ames was a student at law in the office of William Tudor, Esq., of Boston, and commenced practice at Dedham in the autumn of the year 1781. He had already begun to show the "public and private sense of a man." The contest of the States with the parent country, awakened in him a lively interest. He espoused their cause, and though too young to take an active part, watched its progress with patriotic concern. In one instance he was selected for a public trust, which he discharged with an ability beyond his years.

The inconveniences of a depreciated paper currency producing general discontent, and in some cases acts of violence, a convention of delegates from every part of the State assembled at Concord with a view to devise a remedy for the evil. They agreed to regulate the prices of articles arbitrarily, and adjourned to the autumn. At the adjourned meeting Mr. Ames attended, by delegation from his town. The plan adopted at the prior meeting had failed, as was anticipated by the discerning, though it was still an object with many to continue the experiment.

Mr. Ames displayed the subject in a lucid and impressive speech, showing the futility of attempting to establish, by power, that value of things, which depended solely on consent; that the embarrassment was inevitable, and that it must be met by patriotism and patience, and not by attempting to do what was impossible to be done.

Mr. Ames began to be mentioned as a pleader of uncommon eloquence, when his appearance as an essay writer contributed to raise and extend his reputation. The government

of the State of Massachusetts was administered upon the principles of justice, which required that it should enforce the payment of private debts, and that public credit should be supported. Various causes made these functions of the government distressing or inconvenient to many of the people, whose discontents restless intriguing men artfully and industriously inflamed. The spirit of licentiousness broke out in an insurrection. The revolutionary fervor, which had been kindled in the war with Great Britain, seemed to threaten with destruction our own constitution and laws. Liberty was confounded with license; and those who could not be governed by reason, appeared to claim a right not to be governed by force.

Lucius Junius Brutus wrote to animate the government to decision and energy; and when the insurrection was suppressed, Camillus explained the lessons inculcated by the recent dangers and escapes of the country. These pieces were pronounced to be the production of no common mind. It was the light of genius and wisdom, darted athwart the gloom of our political chaos. When they were traced to Mr. Ames, leading men in the State turned their eyes to him as one destined to render the most important services to his country.

In the convention for ratifying the Federal Constitution in 1788, he became conspicuous. The importance of the subject elevated and warmed his mind. It was a decision on the question, whether this country should exhibit the awful spectacle of a people without a government. Within a few days after the opening of the convention, he delivered the speech on biennial elections; and though its merit has been exceeded by his speeches since, its effect was uncommonly great.[1] He showed that his opinion was then formed, that the principal danger to liberty in republics arose from popular factions. A democracy, said he, is a volcano, which conceals the fiery materials of its own destruction. He touched and illuminated other parts of the Constitution in speeches, of which imperfect sketches only are preserved.

He was chosen a member of the House of Representatives

[1] It is probably very imperfectly reported.—*Editor.*

in the State Legislature, which assembled May, 1788. Here he was active in some important measures. He was a zealous advocate of our town schools, as institutions calculated to elevate the character of the great body of the people, and to increase their enjoyments. In a political view, he thought the education gained in these places would do more good by resisting delusion, than evil by furnishing means and incentives to ambition. In this legislature he took the lead in procuring the law, which placed our schools upon the present improved establishment.

Such was the impression that the talents and character of Mr. Ames had made on the public mind, that he was selected, by the friends of the new government, to be one of its conductors and guardians. He was chosen the first representative to Congress from the Suffolk district, which included the capital of the State.

Whether his fame, suddenly acquired and remarkably brilliant, would endure, remained yet to be known. He had not, however, been long in Congress, before his friends were satisfied they had not formed too exalted ideas of his powers. During eight years, the whole of Washington's administration, Mr. Ames was a member of the House of Representatives. Here, in the collision of active and powerful minds, in the consideration of questions of the highest moment, in the agitation of interests that included all our political good, he acted a principal part. This is not the place to explain the principles or merits of this administration. In praise of Washington, not with any thought of compliment to himself, Mr. Ames has observed — "that government was administered with such integrity, without mystery, and in so prosperous a course, that it seemed wholly employed in acts of beneficence."

In the course of this period the civil departments of the government were established; adequate provisions were made for the administration of justice, the maintenance of credit, and the final payment of a large floating debt; a system of internal taxation, which should be independent of the contingencies of foreign commerce, was matured and carried into effect; the Indian tribes, by a wise and humane system, combining justice and force, were made permanent friends;

a dangerous insurrection was suppressed; our differences with Spain and Great Britain were accommodated, and from the latter, honorable recompense was obtained for injuries; the country was rescued from the extreme peril of having its destinies mingled with those of France, and its fortune placed at her disposal. A multitude of subordinate interests, individual and public, came within the care of government. Nerves were given to industry, and life to commerce. The oil of gladness brightened the face of labor, and the whole country wore the smile of prosperity.

In the duties of patriotism which were so successfully performed, Mr. Ames had a distinguished share. On every important question he took an active and responsible part. He gave all his time and all his powers to the public business. The efforts of such men were the more necessary, because the government had to maintain its measures against a party whose zeal was inextinguishable, and activity incessant; and who obstructed every operation to the utmost of their power.

From the commencement of the government, the country was believed to be deeply interested in the event of the bill for funding the public debt. On the introduction of this bill, the opposition gained vigor by the junction of one of the framers, and most able[1] supporters of the Constitution, who from this time became the leader of the discontented party. He proposed to fund the debt, but in a way in which it was deemed impossible it should be funded. His proposal, therefore, was viewed as tending to defeat the object which it professed to favor. At every stage of this momentous business, Mr. Ames employed his resources of argument and eloquence, till the bill was passed into a law.

The famous commercial resolutions of Mr. Madison, founded on a report of the Secretary of State, Mr. Jefferson, were apprehended to put in great hazard our prosperity and independence. To subserve the interests of commerce was the pretext; objects purely political, as Mr. Ames thought, were the motives. He insisted, that commerce could not be served by regulations, which should oblige us to "sell cheap and buy dear;" and he inferred, that the effect of the resolutions

[1] Mr. Madison.

could only be to gratify partialities and resentments, which all statesmen should discard.

His speech on the appropriation for the British treaty was an era of his political life. For many months he had been sinking under weakness, and though he had attended the long and interesting debate on this question, which involved the Constitution and the peace of the United States, it was feared he would be unable to speak. But when the time came for taking a vote so big with consequences, his emotions would not suffer him to be silent. His appearance, his situation, the magnitude of his subject, the force and the pathos of his eloquence, gave this speech an extraordinary power over the feelings of the dignified and numerous assembly who heard it. When he had finished, a member in opposition moved to postpone the decision on the question, that they might not vote under the influence of a sensibility, which their calm judgment might condemn.

At the close of the session, in the spring of 1796, Mr. Ames travelled into Virginia for his health. He thought he derived partial benefit from drinking of the warm springs in Berkley county, and more from the journey and unremitting attention to regimen. In this visit he was an object of the most friendly and respectful attention, individual and public. He found many friends of the Washington system in this State, whose representatives had taken the lead in opposition, observing in a letter, "Virginia has been misrepresented to us as much as the measures of government have been to them; and good men are nowhere generally hostile to the federal cause."

At this time the College of New Jersey expressed their estimation of his public character by conferring on him the degree of Doctor of Laws.

He gained sufficient health to be able to attend the next session of Congress, and to enter into business, though not with all his usual spirit. He was chairman of the committee which reported the answer to the President's speech. This answer contained a most affectionate and respectful notice of the President's declaration, that he now stood for the last time in their presence. In conclusion it said: "For your country's sake, for the sake of republican liberty, it is our

earnest wish, that your example may be the guide of your successors, and thus, after being the ornament and safeguard of the present age, become the patrimony of our descendants." In the debate on this answer he vindicated, with his accustomed openness and ability, the claim of Washington to the unqualified love and gratitude of the nation.

The session being terminated, Mr. Ames, who had previously declined another election, became a private citizen. He retired to his favorite residence at Dedham, to enjoy repose in the bosom of his family, and to unite with his practice as a lawyer, those rural occupations in which he delighted. He applied to the management of his farm and fruitery a portion of that ingenuity and activity which he had bestowed on affairs of State. The excitability of his mind made him interested in whatever he undertook. The desire of usefulness, and a spirit of improvement, directed all his plans and exertions. He resumed his practice, and appeared in important causes. He purposed to revise his law studies, and, for the sake of his family, to make a business of his profession; but he found the labors of the bar too severe a trial of his constitution, and after a few years, gradually relinquished this employment.

He also found it impossible to withdraw his mind from politics. That eventful period in 1798, when the spirit of the nation coöperated with the firmness of the administration in repelling the accumulated aggressions and reiterated indignities of France, revived and animated all his public sympathies. When the next year he perceived the reaction of the opposing party threatening to overpower the government, he wrote Laocoon and other pieces to restore the tone, to rekindle the zeal, to disturb the security, and shake the presumption of the federalists. "Our wisdom," says he, "framed a government, and committed it to our virtue to keep; but our passions have engrossed it, and have armed our vices to maintain the usurpation."

While Governor Sumner was in office, he accepted a seat in the Council of the Commonwealth. When Washington died, he pronounced his eulogy before the Legislature. This performance, though it contains touches of real pathos, is less impassioned than might at first be expected. The numerous

funeral honors paid to the memory of this beloved man had already made a great demand on the public sensibility. Mr. Ames chose rather to dwell on the political events and acts which illustrated his character, than merely to draw tears for his loss. This performance has obtained much praise for its just description, accurate discrimination, sententious wisdom, and calm, dignified eloquence.

At length the apprehensions of Mr. Ames were realized in the downfall of the federal cause, and the Constitution was transferred to the custody of its opposers.

He had often said, that the government was maintained by efforts which would tire or be overpowered. He had seen that it was attacked with unremitting fury, whilst the defence was irregular, inconstant, and feeble.

To secure the country against the worst consequences which this change portended, and which he feared, though retarded, must soon begin to take place, he thought the presses should be sedulously employed by federal writers. He said, he did not expect by this means to make all the people politicians, or acute judges of men and measures, but to assist those who have influence over the opinions of the many, to think correctly on our affairs, and particularly to disabuse their minds of the false theories of democracy. He did not calculate to restore the sceptre to federalism; but, to use his own expression, he hoped "to have the wise and good and the owners of the country, a watchful minority, who, though they may be overcome, will not be deluded, and will save all that can be saved."

He began from this time, and continued for two years, to be a diligent writer of political essays. He then suspended his labor, but resumed it afterwards, and never entirely abandoned it, while he could hold his pen. These productions treat of subjects on which he had bestowed much thought and research, and which he had often discussed in conversation with his friends. They were written, however, always with great rapidity; often in the short intervals of a busy day, on a journey, at an inn, or in a court-house. They show his insight into human nature, and his knowledge of the character of democracy. They afford a strong proof of his ability to foresee the effects of political causes.

Foreign politics, both as affecting our own, and as interesting to humanity, passed under his pen. He beheld, he said, in the French revolution, a "despotism of the mob or the military from the first, and hypocrisy of morals to the last." The policy, the principles, and the power of France in all its forms, before the creation of the new dynasty, and under the present system of universal empire, always appeared to him big with danger to the liberty of the world. The partiality to France in the national feelings of Americans, he regarded as having a tendency at all times to corrupt and pervert American politics. Nothing can exceed the interest with which he watched the efforts of Great Britain against the all-conquering and eccentric ambition of France; not only because he was just to the British nation and character, but because he saw that all our hopes of independence were staked upon the issue.

On all these subjects Mr. Ames was awake, while many others slept. What they saw obscurely, he saw clearly. What to them was distant, affected him as near. The admission of danger implies duty; and many refuse to be alarmed, because they wish to be at ease. The despondent think nothing *can* be done; the presumptuous, nothing *need* be done. Considering these facts and opinions, Mr. Ames's writings will be acknowledged to have produced much effect.

In the year 1804 Mr. Ames was chosen President of Harvard College. His health would not have allowed him to accept the place, had other reasons permitted. Though greatly interested in the education of the young, he did not think his habits adapted to the office, and therefore declined the honor.

From 1795 his health continued to decline, with partial and flattering intermissions, until his death. He was a striking example of magnanimity and patience under suffering. Retaining always the vigor and serenity of his mind, he appeared to make those reflections which became his situation. When speaking of his first attack, he observes, "I trust I realize the value of those habits of thinking, which I have cherished for some time. Sickness is not wholly useless to me. It has increased the warmth of my affection to my friends. It has taught me to make haste in forming the plan

of my life, if it should be spared, more for private duties and social enjoyments, and less for the splendid emptiness of public station, than yet I have done."

At length, after an extreme debility for two years, the frame which had so long tottered, was about to fall. With composure and dignity he saw the approach of his dissolution. He had many reasons for wishing to live. The summons came to demand of his noon of life the residue of a day which had been bright and fair; of his love of fame, the relinquishment of all that respect and honor which the world solicited him to receive; of his patriotism, the termination of all his cares and labors for a country which he loved with inextinguishable ardor; of his conjugal affection, a separation from an object inexpressibly dear; of his parental tenderness, the surrender of his children to the chances and vicissitudes of life without his counsel and care.

But these views of his condition did not sink his heart, which was sustained by pious confidence and hope. He appeared now what he always was, and rose in virtues in proportion to his trial, expressing the tenderest concern for those whom he should leave, and embracing in his solicitude his country and mankind. He expired on the morning of the fourth of July, 1808. When the intelligence reached Boston, a meeting of citizens was held with a view to testify their respect for his character and services. In compliance with their request, his remains were brought to the capital for interment, at which an eulogy was pronounced by his early friend Mr. Dexter, and every mark of respectful notice was paid.

Funeral honors to public characters, being customary offices of decorum and propriety, are necessarily equivocal testimonies of esteem. But Mr. Ames was a private man, who was honored because he was lamented. He was followed to the grave by a longer procession than has perhaps appeared on any similar occasion. It was a great assemblage, drawn by gratitude and admiration around the bier of one exalted in their esteem by his preëminent gifts, and endeared to their hearts by the surpassing loveliness of his disposition.

Having taken notice of the history of Mr. Ames, we are

required to present some additional views of his talents, opinions, and character. The reader of his works will, no doubt, concur with those who knew him and who heard him in public and private, in saying, that he had a mind of high order, in some particulars of the highest, and that he has a just claim to be classed with the men of genius, that quality which it is so much more easy to discern than to define; "that quality, without which judgment is cold and knowledge inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates." We observe in Mr. Ames a liberal portion of all the faculties and qualities that enter into this character, understanding, memory, imagination, invention, sensibility, ardor.

As a speaker and as a writer he had the power to enlighten and persuade, to move, to please, to charm, to astonish. He united those decorations that belong to fine talents to that penetration and judgment that designate an acute and solid mind. Many of his opinions have the authority of predictions fulfilled and fulfilling. He had the ability of investigation, and, where it was necessary, did investigate with patient attention, going through a series of observation and deduction, and tracing the links which connect one truth with another. When the result of his researches was exhibited in discourse, the steps of a logical process were in some measure concealed by the coloring of rhetoric. Minute calculations and dry details were employments, however, the least adapted to his peculiar construction of mind. It was easy and delightful for him to illustrate by a picture, but painful and laborious to prove by a diagram. It was the prerogative of his mind to discern by a glance, so rapid as to seem intuition, those truths which common capacities struggle hard to apprehend; and it was the part of his eloquence to display, expand, and enforce them.

His imagination was a distinguishing feature of his mind. Prolific, grand, sportive, original, it gave him the command of nature and art, and enabled him to vary the disposition and the dress of his ideas without end. Now it assembled most pleasing images, adorned with all that is soft and beautiful; and now rose in the storm, wielding the elements and flashing with the most awful splendors.

Very few men have produced more original combinations.

He presented resemblances and contrasts which none saw before, but all admitted to be just and striking. In delicate and powerful wit he was preëminent.

The exercise of these talents and accomplishments was guided and exalted by a sublime morality and the spirit of a rational piety, was modelled by much good taste, and prompted by an ardent heart.

Mr. Ames was more adapted to the Senate than the bar. His speeches in Congress, always respectable, were many of them excellent, abounding in argument and sentiment, having all the necessary information, embellished with rhetorical beauties, and animated with patriotic fires.

So much of the skill and address of the orator do they exhibit, that, though he had little regard to the rules of the art, they are perhaps fair examples of the leading precepts for the several parts of an oration. In debates on important questions he generally waited before he spoke, till the discussion had proceeded at some length, when he was sure to notice every argument that had been offered. He was sometimes in a minority, when he well considered the temper of a majority in a republican assembly, impatient of contradiction, refutation, or detection, claiming to be allowed sincere in their convictions, and disinterested in their views. He was not unsuccessful in uniting the prudence and conciliation necessary in parliamentary speaking, with lawful freedom of debate, and an effectual use of those sharp and massy weapons which his talents supplied, and which his frankness and zeal prompted him to employ.

He did not systematically study the exterior graces of speaking, but his attitude was erect and easy, his gestures manly and forcible, his intonations varied and expressive, his articulation distinct, and his whole manner animated and natural. His written compositions, it will be perceived, have that glow and vivacity which belonged to his speeches.

All the other efforts of his mind, however, were probably exceeded by his powers in conversation. He appeared among his friends with an illuminated face, and with peculiar amenity and captivating kindness displayed all the playful felicity of his wit, the force of his intellect, and the fertility of his imagination.

On the kind or degree of excellence which criticism may concede or deny to Mr. Ames's productions, we do not undertake with accurate discrimination to determine. He was undoubtedly rather actuated by the genius of oratory, than disciplined by the precepts of rhetoric; was more intent on exciting attention and interest, and producing effect, than securing the praise of skill in the artifice of composition. Hence critics might be dissatisfied, yet hearers charmed. The abundance of materials, the energy and quickness of conception, the inexhaustible fertility of mind which he possessed, as they did not require, so they forbade a rigid adherence to artificial guides in the disposition and employment of his intellectual stores. To a certain extent, such a speaker and writer may claim to be his own authority.

Image crowded upon image in his mind; he is not chargeable with affectation in the use of figurative language; his tropes are evidently prompted by imagination, and not forced into his service. Their novelty and variety create constant surprise and delight. But they are, perhaps, too lavishly employed. The fancy of his hearers is sometimes overplied with stimulus, and the importance of the thought liable to be concealed in the multitude and beauty of the metaphors. His condensation of expression may be thought to produce occasional abruptness. He aimed rather at the terseness, strength, and vivacity of the short sentence, than the dignity of the full and flowing period. His style is conspicuous for sententious brevity, for antithesis and point. Single ideas appear with so much lustre and prominence, that the connection of the several parts of his discourse is not always obvious to the common mind, and the aggregate impression of the composition is not always completely obtained. In those respects where his peculiar excellences came near to defects, he is rather to be admired than imitated.

Mr. Ames, though trusting much to his native resources, did by no means neglect to apply the labors of others to his own use. His early love of books has been mentioned; and he retained and cherished the same propensity through his whole life. He was particularly fond of ethical studies; but he went more deeply into history, than any other branch of learning. Here he sought the principles of legislation, the

science of politics, the causes of the rise and decline of nations, and the character and passions of men acting in public affairs. He read Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Tacitus, Plutarch, and the modern historians of Greece and Rome. The English history he studied with much care. Hence he possessed a great fund of historical knowledge always at command both for conversation and writing. He contemplated the character of Cicero as an orator and statesman with fervent admiration.

He never ceased to be a lover of the poets. Homer, in Pope, he often perused; and read Virgil in the original within two years of his death with increased delight. His knowledge of the French enabled him to read their authors, though not to speak their language. He was accustomed to read the Scriptures, not only as containing a system of truth and duty, but as displaying, in their poetical parts, all that is sublime, animated, and affecting in composition. His learning seldom appeared as such, but was interwoven with his thoughts, and became his own.

In public speaking he trusted much to excitement, and did little more in his closet than draw the outlines of his speech, and reflect on it, till he had received deeply the impressions he intended to make; depending for the turns and figures of language, illustrations, and modes of appeal to the passions, on his imagination and feelings at the time. This excitement continued, when the cause had ceased to operate. After debate, his mind was agitated, like the ocean after a storm, and his nerves were like the shrouds of a ship, torn by the tempest.

He brought his mind much in contact with the minds of others, ever pleased to converse on subjects of public interest, and seizing every hint that might be useful to him in writing, for the instruction of his fellow-citizens. He justly thought, that persons below him in capacity might have good ideas, which he might employ in the correction and improvement of his own. His attention was always awake to grasp the materials that came to him from every source. A constant labor was going on in his mind.

He never sunk from an elevated tone of thought and action, nor suffered his faculties to slumber in indolence. The

circumstances of the times in which he was called to act, contributed to elicit his powers, and supply fuel to his genius. The greatest interests were subjects of debate. When he was in the national legislature, the spirit of party did not tie the hands of the public functionaries; and questions, on which depended the peace or war, the safety or danger, the freedom or dishonor of the country, might be greatly influenced by the counsels and efforts of a single patriot.

The political principles and opinions of Mr. Ames are not difficult to be understood, and should be attentively regarded by those who will estimate the merit of his labors. Mr. Ames was emphatically a republican. He saw that many persons confounded a republic with a democracy. He considered them as essentially distinct and really opposite. According to his creed, a republic is that structure of an elective government, in which the administration necessarily prescribe to themselves the general good as the object of all their measures; a democracy is that, in which the present popular passions, independent of the public good, become a guide to the rulers. In the first, the reason and interests of society govern; in the second, their prejudices and passions. The frame of the American Constitution supposes the dangers of democracy. The division of the Legislature into two branches and their diverse origin, the long duration of office in one branch, the distinct power of the executive, the independence and permanency of the judiciary, are designed to balance and check the democratic tendencies of our polity. They are contrivances and devices voluntarily adopted by the people to restrain themselves from obstructing, by their own mistakes or perversity, the attainment of the public welfare. They are professed means of insuring to the nation rulers, who will prefer the durable good of the whole, to the transient advantage of the whole or a part. When these provisions become ineffectual, and the legislator, the executive magistrate, and the judge become the instruments of the passions of the people, or of the governing majority, the government, whatever may be its form, is a democracy, and the public liberty is no longer safe. True republican rulers are bound to act, not simply as those who appoint them *would*, but as they *ought;* democratic leaders will act in subordina-

tion to those very passions which it is the object of government to control; but as the effect of this subserviency is to procure them unlimited confidence and devotedness, the powers of society become concentrated in their hands. Then it is, that men, not laws, govern. Nothing can be more inconsistent with the real liberty of the people, than the power of the democracy thus brought into action. For in this case the government is a despotism beyond rule, not a republic confined to rule. It is strong, but its strength is of a terrible sort; strong to oppress, not to protect; not strong to maintain liberty, property, and right, it cannot secure justice nor make innocence safe.

Mr. Ames apprehended that our government had been sliding down from a true republic towards the abyss of democracy; and that the ambition of demagogues operating on personal, party, and local passions, was attaining its objects. "A quack doctor, a bankrupt attorney, and a renegado from England, by leading the mobs of three cities, become worth a national bribe; and after receiving it, they are not the servants but the betrayers of the state." The only resource against this degeneracy of our affairs, and their final catastrophe, Mr. Ames considered to be the "correctness of the public opinion, and the energy that is to maintain it." Hence his zeal to support the federal administration in the constitutional exercise of its powers, and his fervid appeals to enlighten, animate, and combine the friends of republican liberty. Hence the stress he laid on the principles, habits, and institutions that pertain to the New England state of society. "Constitutions," said he, "are but paper; society is the substratum of government. The New England state of society is the best security to us, and, mediately, to the United States, for a government favorable to liberty and order. The chance of these is almost exclusively from their morals, knowledge, manners, and equal diffusion of property, added to town governments and clergy; all circumstances inestimable."

In conformity to these principles, he considered party as the necessary engine of good, as well as the instrument of evil in a republic. Party, meaning an association or political connection for the public good, is a name of praise; and a

" party united and actuated by a common impulse or interest, adverse to the rights of the citizens, and the permanent and aggregate interests of the community," even though it be a majority, is a faction. Accident, as well as vice, would operate strongly on the formation of the one body, and in some small degree of the other: but their prevailing character and views constitute their distinction, and determine them good or bad. Neutrality is not permitted to a good citizen. Indifference about political party is not moderation, but either an insensibility to the public welfare, or a selfish desire of getting favor with both sides, at the expense of the honest. Moderation consists in maintaining the love of country superior to party feeling, and in showing respect to the rights of opponents, not in allowing their wishes, or fearing their enmity, or relaxing in prudent exertions to baffle their designs.

Mr. Ames's character as a patriot rests on the highest and firmest ground. He loved his country with equal purity and fervor. This affection was the spring of all his efforts to promote her welfare. The glory of being a benefactor to a great people he could not despise, but justly valued. He was covetous of the fame purchased by desert; but he was above ambition; and popularity, except as an instrument of public service, weighed nothing in the balance by which he estimated good and evil. Had he sought power only, he would have devoted himself to that party in whose gift he foresaw that it would be placed. His first election, though highly flattering, was equally unsought and unexpected, and his acceptance of it interrupted his chosen plan of life. It obliged him to sacrifice the advantages of a profession which he needed, and placed in uncertainty his prospect of realizing the enjoyments of domestic life, which he considered as the highest species of happiness. But he found himself at the disposal of others, and did not so much choose as acquiesce in his destination to the national legislature. The virulent pen of party ventured upon the surmise, that his pecuniary sacrifices were compensated by his interest in the public credit, which his vote and influence helped to establish. From his knowledge of affairs, and his confidential standing with those who were principals in effecting that measure, he

might have made himself a gainer, along with the public, by the funding system. But he consulted his lively sense of reputation by a scrupulous abstinence from participating in this advantage. He observed upon this calumny, which was uttered, not because it was deserved, but because it might be believed: "I have too good proofs of the want of property for surmise to the contrary to have weight; I have much more occasion to justify myself to my family for being poor, than to repel the charge of being rich." His delicate mind and amiable temper made the contests of his public station often irksome. Though he did not allow himself to complain, yet he sometimes felt these irritations with much sensibility. "The value of friends," he observes, "is the most apparent and highest rated to those who mingle in the conflicts of political life. The sharp contests for little points wound the mind, and the ceaseless jargon of hypocrisy overpowers the faculties. I turn from scenes which provoke and disgust me to the contemplation of the interest I have in private life, and to the pleasures of society with those friends whom I have so much reason to esteem."

He did not, however, turn his eyes from the favorable side of his situation. "There is a vexation in public cares, but these cares awaken curiosity; an active interest in the event of measures, which gradually becomes the habit of a politician's soul. Besides, the society of worthy and distinguished men, whose virtues and characters are opened and colored by the sympathy of united efforts, is no mean compensation." His health, and perhaps his life, were the costly oblations which he laid on the altar of patriotism. The fine machinery of his system could ill withstand the excitement produced by public speaking, and his keen interest in public affairs.

It is happy for mankind, when those who engage admiration, deserve esteem; for vice and folly derive a pernicious influence from an alliance with qualities that naturally command applause. In the character of Mr. Ames, the circle of the virtues seemed to be complete, and each virtue in its proper place.

The objects of religion presented themselves with a strong interest to his mind. The relation of the world to its Author, and of this life to a retributory scene in another,

could not be contemplated by him without the greatest solemnity. The religious sense was, in his view, essential in the constitution of man. He placed a full reliance on the divine origin of Christianity. If there was ever a time in his life, when the light of revelation shone dimly upon his understanding, he did not rashly close his mind against clearer vision, for he was more fearful of mistakes to the disadvantage of a system, which he saw to be excellent and benign, than of prepossessions in its favor. He felt it his duty and interest to inquire, and discovered, on the side of faith, a fulness of evidence little short of demonstration. At about thirty-five, he made a public profession of his belief in the Christian religion, and was a regular attendant on its services. In regard to articles of belief, his conviction was confined to those leading principles, about which Christians have little diversity of opinion. Subtle questions of theology, from various causes often agitated, but never determined, he neither pretended nor desired to investigate, satisfied that they related to points uncertain or unimportant. He loved to view religion on the practical side, as designed to operate by a few simple and grand truths on the affections, actions, and habits of men. He cherished the sentiment and experience of religion, careful to ascertain the genuineness and value of impressions and feelings by their moral tendency. He insisted much on the distinction between the real and lively, but gentle and unaffected emotions of a pious mind, naturally passing into the life, and that "morbid fanaticism," which consists in inexplicable sensations, internal acts, and artificial raptures, that have no good aspect upon religious obedience. In estimating a sect, he regarded more its temper than its tenets; he treated the conscientious opinions and phraseology of others on sacred subjects with tenderness, and approached all questions concerning divine revelation with modesty and awe. His prudence and moderation in these particulars may, possibly, have been misconstrued into an assent to propositions, which he meant merely not to deny, or an adoption of opinions or language, which he chose merely not to condemn. He, of all men, was the last to countenance exclusive claims to purity of faith, founded on a zeal for peculiar dogmas, which

multitudes of good men, approved friends of truth, utterly reject. He was no enemy to improvement, to fair inquiry, and Christian freedom; but innovations in the modes of worship and instruction, without palpable necessity or advantage, he discouraged, as tending to break the salutary associations of the pious mind. His conversation and behavior evinced the sincerity of his religious impressions. No levity upon these subjects ever escaped his lips; but his manner of recurring to them in conversation indicated reverence and feeling. The sublime, the affecting character of Christ, he never mentioned without emotion.

Mr. Ames was married July 15th, 1792, to Frances, third daughter of John Worthington, Esq. of Springfield. He left seven children, six of whom are sons; the eldest fifteen years old. He was gratefully sensible of the peculiar felicity of his domestic life. In his beloved home, his sickness found all the alleviation that a judicious and unwearied tenderness could minister; and his intervals of health, a succession of every pleasing engagement and heartfelt satisfaction. The complacency of his looks, the sweetness of his tones, his mild and often playful manner of imparting instruction, evinced his extreme delight in the society of his family, who felt that they derived from him their chief happiness, and found in his conversation and example a constant excitement to noble and virtuous conduct. As a husband and father, he was all that is provident, kind, and exemplary. He was riveted in the regards of those who were in his service. He felt all the ties of kindred. The delicacy, the ardor, and constancy, with which he cherished his friends, his readiness to the offices of good neighborhood, and his propensity to contrive and execute plans of public improvement, formed traits in his character, each of remarkable strength. He cultivated friendship by an active and punctual correspondence, which made the number of his letters very great, and which are not less excellent than numerous.

When he emerged from comparative obscurity, to fill a large space in the eyes of the public, he lost none of the simplicity of character and modesty of deportment which he had before displayed, and neglected none of the friends of his youth. He never yielded to that aversion to the neces-

sary cares of life, which men, accustomed to high concerns, or fond of letters, sometimes improvidently indulge. Without any particle of avarice, he was strictly economical.

He had no envy, for he felt no personal rivalry. His ambition was of that purified sort, which is rather the desire of excellence, than the reputation of it: he aimed more at desert, than at superiority. He loved to bestow praise on those who were competitors for the same kind of public consideration as himself, not fearing that he should sink by their elevation.

He was tenacious of his rights, but scrupulous in his respect to the rights of others. The obloquy of political opponents, was sometimes the price he paid for not deserving it. But it could hardly give him pain, for he had no vulnerable points in his character. He had a perfect command of his temper; his anger never proceeded to passion, nor his sense of injury to revenge. If there was occasional asperity in his language, it was easy to see there was no malignity in his disposition. He tasted the good of his existence with cheerful gratitude; how he received its evil has been already intimated.

His fears concerning public affairs did not so much depress his spirits, as awaken his activity to prevent or mitigate, by his warnings and counsels, the disorder of the state. He was deeply anxious for the fortunes of his country, but more intent on rendering it all the service in his power; convinced that, however uncertain may be the events of the future, the present duty is never performed in vain.

Mr. Ames, in person, a little exceeded the middle height, was well proportioned, and remarkably erect. His features were regular, his aspect respectable and pleasing, his eye expressive of benignity and intelligence. His head and face are shown with great perfection in the engraving prefixed to his works. In his manners he was easy, affable, cordial, inviting confidence, yet inspiring respect. He had that refined spirit of society, which observes the forms of a real, but not studied politeness, and paid a most delicate regard to the propriety of conversation and behavior.

In faint lines we have sketched the character of this man

of worth. If the reader ask, why he is represented without blemishes, the answer is, that, though as a man, he undoubtedly had faults, yet they were so few, so trivial, or so lost among his virtues, as not to be observed, or not to be remembered.

THE WORKS

OF

FISHER AMES.

PART I. — LETTERS.

LETTERS.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT,[1] BOSTON.

New York, March 25th, 1789.

DEAR SIR,—This morning we have twenty-six representatives; and as thirty are necessary to make a quorum, we are still in a state of inaction. This is a very mortifying situation. Mr. Coles, of Virginia, is at Philadelphia, detained by a slight indisposition, but is to set off to-day. Two members will be here from Jersey this evening, and if Messrs. Fitzsimmons and Clymer of Philadelphia come in, as we expect, we shall make an house on Friday. Mr. Elmer is expected to join the Senate this evening, which will make the Senate eleven strong. Therefore, we cannot hope for a Congress of both houses this week.

I am inclined to believe that the languor of the old Confederation is transfused into the members of the new Congress. This city has not caught the spirit, or rather the want of spirit, I am vexing myself to express to you. Their hall will cost £20,000 York money. They are pre-

[1] Mr. Minot and Mr. Ames were fellow-students, and intimate friends. They were admitted to the bar together, in Boston, in November, 1781. Mr. Minot soon became eminent in his profession, and received many tokens of the public confidence. Their written correspondence appears to have ceased, at the termination of Mr. Ames's service in Congress; probably because they had frequent and more direct personal intercourse. Their friendship continued uninterrupted until Mr. Minot's death, which took place in 1802.

paring fireworks, and a splendid barge for the President, which last will cost £200 or £300.[1]

This State is snarling about elections. But Massachusetts distances all the world. How will it be decided there? Write me. How can you preserve such an obstinate silence? If you knew how fast I am obliged to write this nonsense, you would forgive me for making it such.

We lose £1,000 a day revenue. We lose credit, spirit, every thing. The public will forget the government before it is born. The resurrection of the infant will come before its birth. Happily, however, the federal interest is strong in Congress. The old Congress still continues to meet, and it seems to be doubtful whether the old government is dead, or the new one alive. God deliver us speedily from this puzzling state, or prepare my will, if it subsists much longer, for I am in a fever to think of it. Write me long letters often. Your brother Clark's letter will not be forgotten.

My dear friend, yours affectionately.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, April 4, 1789.

Dear Sir,—I presume that you have heard that the House of Representatives met on Wednesday, the 1st, a quorum of thirty attending. They have met daily, and are still occupied in the little business of making arrangements. A committee is employed to form rules and orders. Slower progress will be made in this, by reason of the Senate not having yet a quorum to act upon any bill, in case the House should prepare one. Besides, I am inclined to believe, that there is in every popular assembly a strong resemblance of character—the same refining, quiddling scepticism. The

[1] A Philadelphia newspaper of April 22d, 1789, informs its readers that "an elegant barge is now building in New York to waft the great *Washington* across the Hudson, to be rowed by ten *sea captains*, and one to act as *coxswain*."

House is composed of sober, solid, old-charter folks, as we often say. At least, I am sure that there are many such. They have been in government before, and they are not disposed to embarrass business, nor are they, for the most part, men of intrigue. Yet, my friend, I foresee our General Court nicety. I think the debates upon questions of order will be frequent and animated. It may become necessary to consult the Aruspices, whether a man shall be called doorkeeper or sergeant-at-arms. I have given a reason why the delay arising from this source is not to be regretted, the Senate not having formed. Indeed, the little passions which occasion it will be speedily satiated or wearied, and the great business before us will soon make us sufficiently serious. This in confidence, my friend. However, though I am rather less awed and terrified at the sight of the members than I expected to be, I assure you I like them very well. There are few shining geniuses; there are many who have experience, the virtues of the heart, and the habits of business. It will be quite a republican assembly. It looks like one. Many who expected a Roman senate, when the doors shall be opened, will be disappointed. Admiration will lose its feast. In return for this breach of the rules of poetry, I presume the *antis* will laugh at their own fears. They will see that the aristocracy may be kept down some years longer. My dear friend, by these hasty hints I have tried to give my ideas of the character of the House. You will be better satisfied with it than with newspaper stuff. The Senate will be a very respectable body. Heaven knows when they will act. Report is (and has been so these three weeks,) that several senators are just at hand. Let me hear from you frequently. I am rather more happy in your friendship for being vain of it. Your letters will gratify my vanity and comfort my heart; your neglect would make it ache.

I am, dear sir, your friend and humble servant.

P. S.—Please to observe, that noticing, in the way of compliments, all my friends, would exclude more valuable matter. I do not forget them, and as you know that to be

the case, pray represent me, and say what I ought to say. Mrs. Minot, Mr. Freeman and lady, in particular, &c. &c.

About thirty-five representatives to-day. Mr. Partridge arrived to-day.

Yours, in haste.

Sunday, 5th April.

I am this moment informed that Mr. R. H. Lee is arrived, and so the Senate has a quorum.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

(Confidential.)

New York, May 3d, 1789.— Sunday.

DEAR GEORGE, — I would very cheerfully comply with the wishes expressed in your last, and pursue my sour commentary upon great folks and public bodies, but haste will not permit. I was present in the pew with the President, and must assure you that, after making all deductions for the delusion of one's fancy in regard to characters, I still think of him with more veneration than for any other person. Time has made havoc upon his face. That, and many other circumstances not to be reasoned about, conspire to keep up the awe which I brought with me. He addressed the two Houses in the Senate chamber; it was a very touching scene, and quite of the solemn kind. His aspect grave, almost to sadness; his modesty, actually shaking; his voice deep, a little tremulous, and so low as to call for close attention; added to the series of objects presented to the mind, and overwhelming it, produced emotions of the most affecting kind upon the members. I, Pilgarlic, sat entranced. It seemed to me an allegory in which virtue was personified, and addressing those whom she would make her votaries. Her power over the heart was never greater, and the illustration of her doctrine by her own example was never more perfect.

Inclosed, you have my speech, taken after the debate, while the ideas were so fresh as to make it a very just transcript of my argument. More was said, but what is said in the inclosed was actually delivered. A speech *made afterwards* would not amuse you. My friend, listen. Fenno published the speeches. *Inter nos*, I suppose Goodhue and Gerry wrote theirs, and gave to him. Mine is not flattered by the publication. Suppose it published in the Boston papers as the speech of an anonymous person, or as mine; and if it should be asked how it came to differ from Fenno's, would it do to say, that many other papers take the debates from shorthand writers? I submit it to your friendship to judge whether it will tend to create invidious observations against me, or be a prudent thing. Do you suppress it, or show it to Mr. William Smith at the club, as you please, for the Gazette will not very clearly evince my attention to the business.

Let me beg you to prevent any Centinel, or other, encomiums upon me. They lower a man very much.

I have talked with Thacher about your book.[1] We thought of a list of persons to present a book to, and proposed to ask your choice of twelve out of a larger number. Pray continue your letters, and be assured that I shall not esteem myself when I cease to be, with affection,

Your friend and very humble servant.

I made two speeches, the latter in reply to Madison, who is a man of sense, reading, address, and integrity, as 'tis allowed. Very much Frenchified in his politics. He speaks low, his person is little and ordinary. He speaks decently, as to manner, and no more. His language is very pure, perspicuous, and to the point. Pardon me, if I add, that I think him a little too much of a book politician, and too timid in his politics, for prudence and caution are opposites of timidity. He is not a little of a Virginian, and thinks that State the land of promise, but is afraid of their State politics, and of his popularity there, more than I think

[1] History of the Insurrection in Massachusetts.

he should be. His manner is *something* like John Choate's.[1] He is our first man.

Suppose the list to be

New York—Governor Clinton, the Chancellor Livingston, Col. Hamilton, or Publius.

Jersey—Governor Livingston, Mr. Boudinot.

Pennsylvania—Tench Coxe, Speaker Muhlenburg.

Virginia—Madison, the late President of Congress, Cyrus Griffin.

Carolina—Judge Burke.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, May 14, 1789.—Thursday evening.

DEAR FRIEND,—I have just left a letter for you in the post-office, where I received yours, and saw Mr. Geyer, Junior, who is going to Boston, by way of Providence. I will not hesitate to write again, because my letter, per post, will be found very empty, and will not reach you so soon as this. It is not easy to write the transactions of the House, because I forget the topics which do not reach you by the newspaper. A committee of both Houses had reported that it is not proper to address the President by any other title than that in the Constitution. The House agreed to the report, without debate. But the Senate rejected it, and notified the House that they had nonconcurred. The House was soon in a ferment. The antispeakers edified all aristocratic hearts by their zeal against titles. They were not warranted by the Constitution; repugnant to republican principles; dangerous, vain, ridiculous, arrogant, and damnable. Not a soul said a word *for* titles. But the zeal of these folks could not have risen higher in case of contradiction. Whether the arguments were addressed to the galleries, or intended to hurry the House to a resolve cen-

[1] John Choate, of Ipswich, a member of the Convention of 1788, at which the Federal Constitution was acceded to on the part of the State of Massachusetts.

suring the Senate, so as to set the two Houses at odds, and to nettle the Senate to bestow a title in *their* address, is not clear. The latter was supposed, and a great majority agreed to appoint a committee of conference. The business will end here. Prudence will restrain the Senate from doing any thing at present, and they will call him President, &c., simply.

Another molasses battle has been fought. Like modern victories, it was incomplete, but we got off one cent. Two or three of our side happened to be out when the last and deciding vote passed, otherwise we should have reduced it to four cents, the *ne plus ultra*. A very important vote passed to-day, allowing ten per cent. discount on the duties of goods in American bottoms, which will be half a cent on molasses. The Senate will, I trust, revise our doings with a temperate spirit. The Senate is a very respectable body. An excise is a topic on which my zeal is beginning to kindle. I see, or think I see, the most evident necessity for drawing from that resource some part of the revenues. The southern people dread it, and say that the excise is an odious, unpopular tax, and will fall unequally on them. They are afraid for their whiskey. Madison will oppose this, and it will be a work of labor and some responsibility. But I dread the consequence of leaving it untouched, and at the mercy of the State governments, who can, by that measure, defeat the operation of our protecting duties, and excise our manufactures at their markets. Other ill effects may, and many will inevitably, flow from the neglect of this resource.

Tell Dexter that five cents per quintal is allowed on the export of fish. Salted provisions in a proper degree, I forget what. I think the same per barrel.

Your, I mean our, Wednesday night club is very censorious, and I suppose my hypercriticism on their criticism will not be spared. I thank Mr. Eliot and Mr. Minot for their loyalty and taste. The sentences are rather long, and not so simply constructed as Blair would have them, but may not the meaning be readily known? Is not a very considerable degree of beauty and elegance consistent with a small degree of obscurity? I admire the sentiments. The

writer seems to have *thought* and *felt* when he wrote. Addresses are commonly made by turning a crank of Swift's essay-mill. This is the work of the head and the heart, and, I will maintain, in spite of the club, is evidence of the superior excellence of both. Had the club attended the delivery of it, I think their censure would have been spared.[1] My compliments to them, and let them know that I am ready to obey their instructions, like a good man and true.

Your late kind attentions have led me to consider whether my esteem and value for your friendship can be heightened.

I am, dear George, yours affectionately.

Will you desire Adams and Nourse[2] to send me the Excise Acts of Massachusetts?

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

(Confidential so far as you think it may be needful.)

New York, May 16th, 1789.— Saturday evening.

DEAR FRIEND, — I am tired, lazy, have written twice before by the late post and by this conveyance, and therefore think I shall write little now. Gore not chosen; Jarvis, Dawes, Russell resigned; Boston topsy-turvy. Public life is very subject to mortality, as well as sin and sorrow. I do not admire every thing here. Lately it was debated whether the ships of nations in treaty should pay less tonnage than other foreigners. It passed in the affirmative. I was silent, but voted with the minority. The New England representatives, I believe, thought as I did, but voted for it, because a higher tonnage was imposed on the shipping of nations not in alliance, (say British,) than would have been voted otherwise. So that our shipping has the more advantage. Is that a just principle of action? It is little

[1] He is supposed to refer to Washington's Inaugural Address.
[2] Printers of the Independent Chronicle.

and mean, as well as unwise and unsafe, to discriminate. I wish I may never sacrifice national principles to local interests.

Yesterday it was moved by Madison to make the Impost Bill temporary. This, at the close of the business, without notice, astonished me. I opposed it instanter. He supported it by reasons which I despise. It was, he said, anti-republican to grant a perpetual revenue, unappropriated; it was unwise to part with the power; and the Senate, or a third of the Senate, could prevent a repeal or amendment of the act, though it was already said to be imperfect, and might prove oppressive; the act was perpetual, and the debt might be paid in a few years. Why should the people pay longer than the occasion required? The Senate and President might not agree to repeal the law, though the debt might be paid, unless their terms were agreed to; that it was an experiment, and it would be a thing unprecedented to establish a perpetual tax. You will think this resembles the cant of our Nassons.[1]

I retorted that he and Fitzsimmons had spoken with scorn of a temporary system, but now their consistency had yielded to their republicanism; they would not trust the Senate nor even themselves, with the power of appropriating the money, though if a surplus should arise, not a farthing could be touched without. But was the power of imposing new taxes less than that of appropriations? They had reckoned their wealth on paper, and were concerned at the excess of it. They were afraid of its producing another evil, an excess of credit. But the rate of duties was so high as to relieve me from the fear of the first, and the limiting the act would repel the other evil. That money is power, a permanent revenue is permanent power, and the credit which it would give was a safeguard to the government. With all the powers which we had, and the most prudent exercise of them, it was not to be imagined that the

[1] Major Samuel Nason, (or Nasson, as his name was sometimes spelt,) of Sanford, York county, Maine, was a member of the Massachusetts Convention, held in 1788, for the adoption of the Federal Constitution. He appears to have somewhat affected the heroic and ornate style of eloquence, and voted in the negative on the general question of the adoption.

government was too strong, or too competent to preserve its being; it was weak, young, and counteracted. Instead of immortality, we took a lease for years. Necessity forced us upon a revenue system now. A few years hence would the zeal for government be so warm? would not factions arise? should not we hear again of State interests, and the threats of those who will complain of actual oppression? The system was not liked now; half the opposition to another act would destroy all credit. We might have occasion to pledge our funds. Why make our own terms with our creditors bad? If the bill is bad, mend it. It was strange that men, who so lately defended the bill as a good one, should now admit the truth of our objections, and try to reconcile us to the blunders of it, by the hope that we should not have long to endure them. A *perpetual* act might be repealed or amended. It was a play on words. But the funds, if pledged, could not be taken away without an *act.* A temporary act might expire, and it was a mere non-feasance not to renew it. The papers will give you some further state of the debate, though nothing of it is yet published, that I know. I supposed it might amuse you to state a little of it as it came into my head. The yeas and nays were called for to-day; eight against limiting, forty-one for it. My friends voted against me, I suppose, on the principle that the molasses duty five cents, and some other points, are wrong, and the sooner the act expires the better. But, is it not a risk, to trust the revenue in future to the caprice of the antifederalism, the State politics, or the knavery of these folks? No revenue, no government, is a truth, and may you not be forced to buy their consent to a revenue to keep life in the government, either by amendments, by renouncing protecting and navigation duties, or by damning the debt? On the other hand, is there any color of reason for a temporary regulation? I am sick of fluctuating counsels, of governing by expedients. Let us have stability and system. I glory in my side of the question. I think Mr. Madison was chagrined. Spleen at reducing molasses was a part of his motive. He talked very differently of the Senate lately. Fitzsimmons is very like our . . . . He said to me in private, formerly, that

a temporary system was despicable and ruinous. Publicly, he called it, in a former speech, a paltry one. I reproached him with the last term in my speech. He felt it very sensibly. The bill is gone to the Senate with all its imperfections. I wish to serve your brother, and speak of him to Mr. Strong, but cannot give a word of information what, or when, any thing will be done.

Yours, &c.

P. S. I break off short, for it grows late. Write me when the House get together, how they look, &c. The bill passed for seven years. Madison was for twenty-five, which was a very ridiculous comment on his own principles.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Monday, May 18, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND, — I am sitting very lazily in the House, who are debating about the manner of enrolling the acts of Congress, which I care little about. I suppose the object is to have a clerk of enrolments, with a view of providing a good warm office for . . . . . Fame is as flattering as other painters, and as seldom draws likenesses. I thought . . . . . another Seneca or Plato, before I saw him. Now, I think him an *old woman*. He is a smooth, plausible Irishman, but superficial, arrogant, and rapacious. Whether I know enough of him to support this opinion, is of little consequence, for I write to you only.

I inclose a part of the Journal; as much as I could get at. I will send you more with pleasure.

Pray let me know how the General Court looks and acts.

Fitzsimmons, of Philadelphia, is supposed to understand trade, and he assumes some weight in such matters. He is plausible, though not over civil; is artful, has a glaring eye, a down look, speaks low, and with apparent candor and coolness. I have heard him compared to . . . . .

The similitude is not unapt. He is one of those people, whose face, manner, and sentiments concur to produce caution, if not apprehension and disgust. Madison is cool, and has an air of reflection, which is not very distant from gravity and self-sufficiency. In speaking, he never relaxes into pleasantry, and discovers little of that warmth of heart, which gives efficacy to George Cabot's reasoning, and to Lowell's. His printed speeches are more faithful than any other person's, because he speaks very slow, and his discourse is strongly marked. He states a principle and deduces consequences, with clearness and simplicity. Sometimes declamation is mingled with argument, and he appears very anxious to carry a point by other means than addressing their understandings. He appeals to popular topics, and to the pride of the House, such as that they have voted before, and will be inconsistent. I think him a good man and an able man, but he has rather too much theory, and wants that discretion which men of business commonly have. He is also very timid, and seems evidently to want manly firmness and energy of character.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, May 19, 1789.

My Dear Friend, — You will see, by the papers, that your friend was left in a small minority, on the late question whether the Impost Bill should be limited. When a thing is decided, it would be weak and cowardly to suppose that all the ill effects which may result from the measure actually will result. But while it is in debate, it is proper to view it in that manner. Now the affair is over, the public will naturally see it in the first point of view, and of course the opposition of the nays will seem excessive. On sober reflection, (if you will admit that a man can think soberly of a question in which his opinion has been overruled, and stands of record,) I think still that the measure was a very

improper one. The arguments for it were not only inconsistent with one another, but of the Nassonian kind. I never knew an argument addressed to the pride of the House, to the pride of *corps*, as I think the French call it, prove ineffectual, if used so much in time, as to get possession of the head, before better arguments can reach it. The House were told, that if they made the law perpetual, the Senate and President would have little need of them; that in Connecticut, an old law vested the appointment of the sheriff, or whipper, or some such officer, in the Governor and Council; and though it was found improper, they had never been able to get it repealed. Wonderful! What could the President and Senate do with the public money, without the act of the whole Legislature appropriating it? Any other persons are as likely to break into the Treasury and steal it. We shall not adopt the State laws for the purpose of collecting the duties. A bill for that purpose was ordered to lie on the table. It would have been a very proper completion of the temporary system.

We are about forming the civil departments. I cannot give you any information on the subject yet. Dr. Appleton wrote me a very judicious, friendly letter, some days ago. Pray thank him, and say to my friends how much I think of them. I must conclude.

Your friend.

P. S. Our House have been voting to vest the power of removing certain officers, say the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the President only, without the concurrence of the Senate. The idea was to give him this power, and consider him as responsible for the use of it. To-morrow it will be debated whether the Treasury shall be directed by a board or by one person.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

May 27, 1789. — Election day in Massachusetts.

DEAR FRIEND, — You give yourself unnecessary trouble to make apologies in regard to your not having sooner noticed my information respecting your books. For I take pleasure in thinking that I can be of any use to you, and you oblige me by putting my disposition to the trial. I am a cordial wellwisher to your brother Clarke, for his sake as well as yours, and I am not troubled or teased with his application. I have seemed a little negligent, I am sensible, but haste and the present undecided state of appointments prevented my writing particularly about it. I am totally uncertain what offices will be created, and how appointments will be made. I will not forget nor neglect him.

Your letter is dated *June* 20, by a kind of anticipation. I understood the date, and am not disposed to be witty, in a captious way. I am gratified by your correspondence, only let me beg that you will not consider it as a duty, or that I claim it. I will not complain if you should not write once a month, though I shall be pleased to read your letters at all times. When you feel disposed, write. Let the pen go freely. I will do the like. To people whom I do not so much esteem, I will write punctually and in form. You will have such claims on your time, that I should be cruel to require more labor of you.

You call my letter a desponding one. I had forgot every syllable of it. Before yours came, the weather had become fair, and my memory had lost the traces of the ideas which it seems *that* had conveyed to you. A man who feels too much, which you justly observe, a public man should not, will represent things in a stronger manner than he feels them. The habit of feeling strongly produces that of expressing strongly, and I am not sure that strong expressions, *e converso*, do not produce strong feelings. All this is my case. With a warm heart, and an hot head, I often dupe my friends and myself. I felt chagrined at the yawning listlessness of many here, in regard to the great

objects of the government; their liableness to the impression of arguments *ad populum;* their State prejudices; their overrefining spirit in relation to trifles; their attachment to some very distressing formalities in doing business, and which will be a curse to all despatch and spirit in transacting it. I compared these with the idea I had brought here, of demi-gods and Roman senators, or at least, of the first Congress. The objects now before us require more information, though less of the heroic qualities, than those of the first Congress. I was sorry to see that the picture I had drawn was so much bigger and fairer than the life. Add to this, that the rashness and madness of the rate of duties justified my fears, and my judgment converted my chagrin into terror approaching to despair. (In this particular *note* the language is too strong for the occasion.) But since, I have reflected coolly, that in all public bodies, the majority will be such as I have described — I may add, ought to be such; and if a few understand business, and have, as they will, the confidence of those who do not, it is better than for all to be such knowing ones; for they would contend for supremacy; there would not be a sufficient principle of cohesion. The love of ease makes many, who are knowing, submit to the judgment of others, more industrious, though not more knowing, than themselves, and this cements the mass. It produces artificial ignorance, which, joined with real ignorance, has been found, in fact, to furnish mortar enough for all public assemblies. The House is composed of very good men, not shining, but honest and reasonably well-informed, and in time they will be found to improve, and not to be much inferior in eloquence, science, and dignity, to the British Commons. They are patriotic enough, and I believe there are more stupid (as well as more shining) people in the latter, in proportion.

The Senate has begun to reduce the rate of duties. Rum is reduced one third. Jamaica ten cents, common, eight. Molasses from five to four. This is not proportionally lowered. I feel as Enceladus would if Etna was removed. The Senate, God bless them, as if designated by Providence to keep rash and frolicsome brats out of the fire,

have demolished the absurd, impolitic, mad discrimination of foreigners in alliance from other foreigners.

The business of titles sleeps. It is a very foolish thing to risk much to secure; and I wish Mr. Adams had been less undisguised.[1] I do not fear tyranny from giving, nor contempt from refusing, a title. Mr. Adams is greatly respected, and I have no doubt will be eminently useful, and enough on his guard in relation to delicate points. He has been long absent, and at first he had not so clear an idea of the temper of the people as others who had not half his knowledge in other matters.

You give me excellent advice in regard to Dwight's good example. I never think of that fascinating subject without trying to unbewitch myself by the school-boy trash about one, who "all the bread and cheese he got, he laid upon a shelf," and when the quantity was sufficient, the story proceeds, that he got a wife. You are sensible that I am not in the land of bread and cheese. I know not what I am here for. I was satisfied with my former condition, and was looking forward to a better. Now my future state seems to be receding. Is this enigmatical? I believe what I write often seems to be nonsense, for want of an interpretation.

George Cabot is coming here in two or three weeks with his wife, on a journey for her health. I shall see him with a great deal of pleasure. I see a Massachusetts man with pleasure; but Dawes,[2] whom I could ask a million questions, seemed to be worth his weight in money. He has done right in declining his seat. I must finish.

Your affectionate friend.

[1] This remark is supposed to refer to Mr. Adams's work, entitled "Discourses on Davila."

[2] Thomas Dawes, a member of the club, and well known afterwards as Judge of the Municipal Court in Boston.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

(This letter is a piece of egotism. You may read as little as you think fit.)

New York, May 29, 1789.— Friday morning.

DEAR MINOT, — Yours by the post reached me last evening. You give me your advice with a delicacy which evinces your discernment of the frailty of the human heart. In general, advice procures little thanks, and does little good. Those who need, will seldom bear it, and those who can best give, will seldom risk giving it. Your giving it is very far from hurting my pride. If I had not in some degree your good opinion, and to a very great degree your good wishes, you would not have done the act of kindness which calls for all my gratitude. I am proud that you think my temper will bear it, and I submit to your friendly discipline with cheerfulness. Submit, did I say? I ask, I entreat it. Your friendship will be as useful, as it has ever been agreeable. Your office will not be a sinecure.

My letter by this day's post was sent to the office before yours came. It will serve as an answer to yours, however, for I enlarge, in that, upon my proneness to represent things too strongly. But did I express any contempt for Madison? Upon my word, I do not recollect a word of it, and there is not in my heart a symptom of its having ever been there. Before I came, I was cautioned against pinniug my faith on any man's sleeve. I was afraid of it, for I think I am not apt to resist the influence of those whom I esteem. But I see in Madison, with his great knowledge and merit, so much error, and some of it so very unaccountable, and tending to so much mischief, that my impatience may have tinctured my letter with more gall than I remember. Why I disapprove the limitation of the revenue act, I have told you. I will add, this is a government over governments. We may find it as hard to get a revenue bill reënacted, as the kings of England used to find money-bills, and for the same, or even stronger, reasons. It may be used as a means of starving the government into concessions and sacrifices. A million of popular objections will furnish addi-

tional motives and a safe pretext. If I am in the wrong on this point, I am very much in the wrong. If accident or mistake made me warm at first, reflection has made me obstinate. I believe that Madison is not at ease on this point, and I think I have seen him struggling to disentangle himself from his own web. He was decided for the tonnage acts being *un*limited. His former friends could not see the difference of the cases, and were refractory. I will not say another word about it. But do you think me in the wrong? Take the pains to point out my error.

You may be assured that I was not betrayed into any warmth in the argument in the House, that I know of. There are certain bounds which my zeal arrives at, almost instantly. The habit of being in public assemblies has imposed sufficient restraint on my mind, and I seldom pass those bounds. You know what they are. You know my manner of reasoning in public, and I am sensible that the excess of that zeal would very much lessen me. Your caution is very necessary, however; for if I do not offend, it is a frailty to which I am constantly liable. I say many words, you see, about it.

I do not remember any thing relating to shipping or navigation in which I took an opposite side to Madison, in the public debates. The discrimination seems to me undignified and impolitic. I voted against it silently. The States not in alliance allow us as good terms of admission into their ports, as we get from our allies, and probably better than we could get by treaty. I am now unable to account for Madison's passionate attachment to the discrimination. It is a favorite point with the Frenchmen in town. Yet it is admitted, that it will not benefit France. Why then urge it? Is it to affront the English, and to create a closer connection with her enemy? He is very much devoted to the French, it is said, and his reasonings were not very logical, nor much to the credit of his political character. That you may be less liable to misunderstand my idea of him in future, take this explication of it. He is probably deficient in that fervor and vigor of character which you will expect in a great man. He is not likely to risk bold measures, like Charles Fox, nor even to persevere in any measures

against a firm opposition, like the first Pitt. He derives from nature an excellent understanding, however, but I think he excels in the quality of judgment. He is possessed of a sound judgment, which perceives truth with great clearness, and can trace it through the mazes of debate, without losing it. He is admirable for this inestimable talent. As a reasoner, he is remarkably perspicuous and methodical. He is a studious man, devoted to public business, and a thorough master of almost every public question that can arise, or he will spare no pains to become so, if he happens to be in want of information. What a man understands clearly, and has viewed in every different point of light, he will explain to the admiration of others, who have not thought of it at all, or but little, and who will pay in praise for the pains he saves them. His clear perception of an argument makes him impressive, and persuasive sometimes. It is not his *forte*, however. Upon the whole, he is an useful, respectable, worthy man, in a degree so eminent, that his character will not sink. He will continue to be a very influential man in our country. Let me add, without meaning to detract, that he is too much attached to his theories, for a politician. He is well versed in public life, was bred to it, and has no other profession. Yet, may I say it, it is rather a science, than a business, with him. He adopts his maxims as he finds them in books, and with too little regard to the actual state of things. One of his first speeches in regard to protecting commerce, was taken out of Smith's Wealth of Nations. The principles of the book are excellent, but the application of them to America requires caution. I am satisfied, and could state some reasons to evince, that commerce and manufactures merit legislative interference in this country, much more than would be proper in England. The drain that is making of our people beyond the mountains, and the want of sufficient intercourse between the manufacturing and staple States, the British credit, British agents, &c., are among the circumstances which furnish those reasons. I say again, that he is afraid, even to timidity, of his State, and has reasoned, to my disgust and surprise, about the topics I have mentioned so strongly. I am less ambitious, and, upon my word, less distinguished than

you think me. I am as silent as I can possibly be, and am not in a hurry to take consequence. I shall certainly have as much as I deserve, and if I should get more, I should soon lose it. I am resolved to apply closely to the necessary means of knowledge, as I well know it is the only means of acquiring reputation. I have scarcely opened my mouth in the House these ten days, and if my restraining grace should hold out against the temptations I am exposed to, my judgment will lead me to decline any part in the tedious frivolity of the daily business. We are not in haste, or at least, have not learned to be in a hurry to advantage. I think it is the most dilatory assembly in the universe. Which do you most admire at this moment, my candor or my prudence? The latter is not offended by confiding the remark to you, and truth will prove the former clear. Thus endeth the first lesson. Amen.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, May 31, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND, — Yours of the 24th is before me. You propose a weekly exchange of letters. You call yourself the *Futher Carnes* of the Club. You will not pretend to be of so much importance to a member of the Federal House as that gentleman would be.

I do not believe you will read, or that you have ever read, one of my public-spirited letters on the floor of the house.

The club are, however, my constituents, as Major Reed says; and I cannot disobey the *instructions of my constituents.*

I am already remarkable for my scribbling. My fellow-lodgers call me the Secretary of State. I will not promise punctuality, but if I may calculate upon the future by the past, I shall write twice a week. I leave it to the clerical members of the club to decide whether my letters would not read better if they were not so long and so frequent.

The Senate are reducing the rate of duties: Jamaica spirits to ten cents; other spirits to eight; Madeira eighteen; other wines ten; Molasses will probably be reduced to three. If so reduced, I am afraid the drawback will be refused. The House will submit to the amendments reluctantly. I think they will pass.

The collection bill is reported. It is longer, and has more checks than the Massachusetts impost. It will be debated this week. Mr. Dawes will inform you more fully about the state of our politics than I can do. I wish most earnestly that Congress would despatch the Civil Departments, the necessary Revenue Acts, say impost and excise, the Judiciary, and have a recess of a few months, leaving the business of appropriating the revenue, till we have one,—say next session. It would be well to see the people who sent us, and to hear what they have to say. If we keep shut up here, we shall forget their sentiments, and lay such duties as they will disapprove. Is not this a very republican sentiment? It will do to read, in the character of Mr. Carnes. There is much to do, but I think we should do wisely to postpone all the subjects of legislation, which will admit of it. The prospect of a recess would produce despatch.

What shall we do with Rhode Island? Would it be too condescending to send a recommendation to their Assembly to call a Convention, in the words of the former Congress? Would it be proper to make their produce liable to the same duties as foreign produce, after the 1st of December next, when North Carolina may perhaps accede, so as to allow time for the Rhode Island folks to adopt it? Would it —— (At this place I was called down to see company, and I do not know what should fill up the blank.) I understand that the House in Massachusetts is likely to be well disposed, and less numerous than the last. I wish they may pass the School Bill as it was sent up to the Senate. I would have our State first for knowledge, in the Union. Some are of opinion that ignorance produces loyalty. In 1786 it was otherwise, and I believe it will ever be found, that the best informed among the people are the most governable. You dislike the responsibility of the President in the case of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. I would have the President re-

sponsible for his appointments; and if those whom he puts in are unfit, they may be impeached, on misconduct, or he may remove them, when he finds them obnoxious. It would be easier for a minister to secure a faction in the Senate, or get the protection of the senators of his own State, than to secure the protection of the President, whose character would suffer by it. The number of the senators, the secrecy of their doings, would shelter *them*, and a corrupt connection between those who appoint *to* office, and who also maintain *in* office, and the officers themselves would be created. The meddling of the Senate in appointments is one of the least defensible parts of the Constitution. I would not extend their power any further. I must finish.

Yours, affectionately.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

New York, June 11, 1789.

DEAR SIR, — I begin to wish you would break silence. I hear, by Mr. Cabot, of the return or arrival of the new married pair, whom God bless, to Springfield.

. . . . . .

I write in a violent hurry. Company interrupted my writing, and the post-office is near closing.

The Senate has finished the impost bill. It is not sent down yet. Molasses at two and a half cents, and no drawback on exportation. I hope the House, proud and stubborn as they are, will comply with the amendments, and pass the bill as speedily as possible.

The bill for the collection of the duties produces much debate, as indeed every thing does. Our House is a kind of Robin Hood society, where every thing is debated. The judicial business is maturing fast in the committee of the Senate.

Mr. Madison has introduced his long expected amend-

ments.[1] They are the fruit of much labor and research. He has hunted up all the grievances and complaints of newspapers, all the articles of conventions, and the small talk of their debates. It contains a bill of rights, the right of enjoying property, of changing the government at pleasure, freedom of the press, of conscience, of juries, exemption from general warrants, gradual increase of representatives, till the whole number, at the rate of one to every thirty thousand, shall amount to , and allowing two to every State, at least. This is the substance. There is too much of it. Oh! I had forgot, the right of the people to bear arms.

Risum teneatis amici?

Upon the whole, it may do some good towards quieting men, who attend to sounds only, and may get the mover some popularity, which he wishes.

It grows dark, and I must finish.

Yours, affectionately.

The drawback is taken off from all spirits exported, brandy and gin excepted.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, June 12, 1789. — Friday.

DEAR MINOT, — I inclose, for Mr. Benjamin Russell, some of the amendments of the impost bill in Senate. Please to hand it to him. He has been very civil in sending me papers.

Your brother, Clarke Minot, wrote me by the last post. The appointments seem to be almost as far off and uncertain

[1] A proposition to amend the Constitution, in compliance with the expressed wishes of most of the States, was early introduced by Mr. Madison. Seventeen amendments were agreed upon in the House, which were reduced by the Senate (partly by compression of two or three into one) to twelve. Ten were ultimately adopted by the people.

as ever. There is proposed a collector and naval officer to each port. But the nature and number of offices is totally uncertain in this state of the bill. It is daily debated. With tolerable diligence, and good temper, which has not been wanting hitherto, it will be finished next week, and sent to the Senate. The civil departments will employ us next, and the judiciary the Senate. They will finish their stint, as the boys say, before the House has done. Their number is less, and they have matured the business in committee. Yet Mr. Madison has inserted, in his amendments, the increase of representatives, each State having two at least. The rights of conscience, of bearing arms, of changing the government, are declared to be inherent in the people. Freedom of the press, too. There is a prodigious great dose for a medicine. But it will stimulate the stomach as little as hasty-pudding. It is rather food than physic. An immense mass of sweet and other herbs and roots for a diet drink.

Mr. Barrett will wait, and I must finish. But be assured that I am, affectionately,

Your friend.

The judiciary bill is reported in Senate, ordered to be printed, and to have a second reading next Monday week.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, June 23, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND,—I have written so often, that my conscience did not reproach me with any neglect of duty to you, or to our good friends in the club. I am not able to write fine-spun sentiments and grave remarks, and to give my letter the ease of epistolary writing. I would write, as I am used to converse with you; and as to matter of fact, the newspapers take the advantage of me, and possess them-

selves of every novelty, before I could send it. You will see of course how slender materials are left me, to gratify the curiosity of our friends. The debate in relation to the President's power of removal from office, is an instance. Four days' unceasing speechifying has furnished you with the merits of the question. The transaction of yesterday may need some elucidation. In the committee of the whole, it was moved to strike out the words "to be removable by the President," &c. This did not pass, and the words were retained. The bill was reported to the house, and a motion made to insert in the second clause, "whenever an officer shall be removed by the President, or a vacancy shall happen in any other way," to the intent to strike out the first words. The first words, "to be removable," &c., were supposed to amount to a legislative disposal of the power of removal. If the Constitution had vested it in the President, it was improper to use such words as would imply that the power was to be exercised by him in virtue of this act. The mover and supporters of the amendment supposed that a grant by the legislature might be resumed, and that as the Constitution had already given it to the President, it was putting it on better ground, and, if once gained by the declaration of both houses, would be a construction of the Constitution, and not liable to future encroachments. Others, who contended against the advisory power of the Senate in removals, supposed the first ground the most tenable, that it would include the latter, and operate as a declaration of the Constitution, and at the same (time) expressly dispose of the power. They further apprehended that any change of position would divide the victors, and endanger the final decision in both houses. There was certainly weight in this last opinion. Yet the amendment being actually proposed, it remained only to choose between the two clauses. I think the latter, which passed, and which seems to imply the legal (rather constitutional) power of the President, is the safest doctrine. This prevailed, and the first words were expunged. This has produced discontent, and possibly in the event it will be found disagreement, among those who voted with the majority.

This is in fact a great question, and I feel perfectly satis-

fied with the President's right to exercise the power, either by the Constitution or the authority of an act. The arguments in favor of the former fall short of full proof, but in my mind they greatly preponderate.

You will say that I have expressed my sentiments with some moderation. You will be deceived, for my whole heart has been engaged in this debate. Indeed it has ached. It has kept me agitated, and in no small degree unhappy. I am commonly opposed to those who modestly assume the rank of champions of liberty, and make a very patriotic noise about the people. It is the stale artifice which has duped the world a thousand times, and yet, though detected, it is still successful. I love liberty as well as anybody. I am proud of it, as the true title of our people to distinction above others; but so are others, for they have an interest and a pride in the same thing. But I would guard it by making the laws strong enough to protect it. In this debate a stroke was aimed at the vitals of the government, perhaps with the best intentions, but I have no doubt of the tendency to a true aristocracy.

Wednesday Evening, June 25.

I have received yours, per post, and thank you for it. I am hurrying this to get it in before the mail closes. We have had the treasury bill before us to-day — made some progress. A puerile debate arose, whether the Secretary of the Treasury should be allowed to exhibit his reports and statements to the legislature. The champions of liberty drew their swords, talked blank verse about treasury influence, a ministry, violation of the privileges of the House by giving him a hearing from time to time. They persevered so long and so furiously, that they lost all strength, and were left in a very small minority. The clause, permitting this liberty, passed.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, July 2, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND, — You seem to consider me as a kind of traitor to your expectations of a weekly letter. In sober truth, I set out better than I can hold out. While I scribbled the hasty reflections which occurred to me, and which came in more plenty because the novelty of my situation supplied them, I imposed no guard upon my prudence, and felt little reserve. But inasmuch as your club expects my communications, I begin to put on a wise face, and to calculate how very profound the remarks must be, which will be worthy of the attention of those gentlemen. Mr. . . . . may be assured, that I am not hardy enough to expose any undigested, crude opinions, to the censure of so redoubted a critic. Nor would it be safe to lay aside my caution, if any thing should occur which might affect the interests and feelings of the harmless flock under his pastoral charge.

Yesterday, for instance, the tonnage bill came upon the *tapis*. The discrimination in favor of nations in treaty with us, would not go down in the Senate. They expunged the clause which creates it. The House non-concurred. The Senate adhered, and sent back the bill. Mr. Madison, who patronized it, urged the House to adhere to their vote allowing the discrimination. He said it was a point not to be given up. On the other side, it was said to be a mark of obstinacy and ill-temper, thus repeatedly to disagree; — harmony between the two Houses was to be cultivated; — the loss of the bill would ensue, as the Senate was nearly unanimous, and inflexible; — that the loss of revenue, and the injury to the navigation of the Union, which this bill would favor, were weighty considerations. The ayes and noes were demanded by Mr. Page; — the bill passed, thirty-one against nineteen; and so the discrimination is expunged. Whether Mr. Madison's conduct were not a little intemperate; whether there is any reason *for* his principles, which would not operate *against* the loss of the bill? The whole

merits of the question of discrimination, that is to say, of favoring the French and restricting the English, will not be clearly understood by the papers. It is proposed to wage a commercial war with England. The proposed measure would not injure, though it would irritate, England. It would not benefit France, though every Frenchman seemed to wish it. And it would deprive our treasury of some revenue, and give less encouragement to our own shipping than it merits. However, the Britons have so large a proportion of the shipping employed in our country, that it would have little effect in the two latter ways. If so, it would be a wanton insult upon one nation, and an empty compliment to the other. Why, then, was it wished and pushed so very zealously? Its commercial effects would be little. Was it for the sake of its political effects? Was it to prolong in America the expiring spirit of alienation and hatred, which the war had fostered against England? The Constitution was supported by arguments tending to prove that general laws of trade were necessary to exclude the Britons from our trade, and great effects were promised, more than can ever be verified. Part is certainly true, and I am clearly of opinion that the navigation and manufactures of America cannot well be too much encouraged. But the people have been led to expect an exclusion of the British rivalry, that we may force or frighten them into an allowance of a free trade to the West Indies, &c.; and the people of Virginia (whose murmurs, if louder than a whisper, make Mr. Madison's heart quake) are said to be very strenuous for a law to restrict the British trade. They owe them money, perhaps would be glad to quarrel with their creditors. Their tobacco will sell in all events. But are we Yankees invulnerable, if a war of regulations should be waged with Britain? Are they not able to retaliate? are they not rich enough to bear some loss and inconvenience? would not their pride spurn at the idea of being forced into a treaty? would not their politics be offended at the partial fondness for France? would not they exclude our potash, flaxseed, &c., and shut us out from their India factories? — perhaps foment the discontents of the Western people, and protect them against the government, and eventually supply their

West Indies from the Mississippi. Is it not more prudent to maintain a good understanding with Great Britain, and to preserve a dignified neutrality and moderation of conduct towards all nations? It is said the Senate are willing to put all foreign nations trading here upon the footing of our people in their ports. But is it not a risky measure, exposing a feeble trade, as the American is, to the shock of experiment? Will the people forbear murmuring, if the West India trade should be cut off? Will it not affect our own government? Had we not better wait till government has gained strength? And then, if we can extend our own trade, by retaliating upon foreign nations their own restrictions, I would do it; but I am afraid of taking an intemperate zeal for reformation of commerce for my guide. Some say, let us interdict all trade with the British Islands, unless in our own vessels. Whether we could carry such a law into effect, I doubt. I think we could not. If we could, what effect would it produce? By the neutral ports, from Hamburg, the Baltic, and the British colonies, they would still be supplied with provisions and lumber. But they would be supplied at a dearer rate. Britain could well bear the loss of forty or fifty thousand pounds sterling. But would not a part of that loss fall upon us? Lumber is worth nothing but the labor of getting it to market. We should lose the employment, and our people would make loud complaints, and would smuggle their articles to the British market at a less net price than they get at present. Our restrictions would operate as a bounty upon the produce of the British colonies on the continent.

What an immeasurable length I have spun out my letter to, without intending it.

Perhaps our friends will think me whimsical in these remarks. A vindictive policy, if it merits the name, would be more grateful to the people. I freely declare, that I apprehend the Eastern interest would suffer greatly by any such measures, if taken speedily. The encouragement of our own shipping, though too moderate, will do something, and I trust will be increased from time to time. The duties will protect manufactures tolerably well, and the Southern market for them will be a growing one.[1] Their pay is bad,

but they have rich staples. A foundation is laid for the prosperity of these interests, which ought to be dear to us; — perhaps the attempt to do more would be found as pernicious to them in practice, as it is repugnant in theory to the sober dictates of prudence. Our friends will judge with candor, whether my ideas are just. I have not written a word that I intended to write, but I have been so lengthy, that I can only say that I am

Your affectionate friend.

P. S. Though the tonnage bill has passed without the discrimination, I am afraid that there is a strong disposition in both Houses to restrict the trade of foreign nations, especially to the British West Indies, unless carried on in our own vessels. It is principally for that reason, I have dilated upon the subject. Notwithstanding my scruples, such a measure would pass, if set a-going. I think so, because many opposed the discrimination because it did not go far enough.

The treasury bill has nearly passed. I sent it to Dr. Appleton. It remains only to be engrossed, and differs little from the printed bill, except that the Secretary of the Treasury is to be removable by the President alone, is to give bond, and is forbidden to trade.

[1] A few indications of the existence of the cotton manufacture appear in the newspapers at this early date. The Gazette of the United States has an item headed, "Petersburg, Va., July 9, 1789," in the following terms: — "Virginia cloth, of excellent quality and very cheap, may be purchased almost every day of the country people, who come to town for the purpose of making sale of it. It is made of cotton, and several gentlemen have bought full suits of it." Very possibly Virginia may have been the first cotton-manufacturing State.

The same paper, under date Aug. 15, 1789, says: — "The cotton manufacture is established at Philadelphia and at Beverly. The Boston Assembly have granted 500*l.* to the one at Beverly, as a gratuity for its advancement. It is carried on with Arkwright's machines."

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

No. 1. New York, July 8, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND, — We are going on a slow trot, on our journey to the completion of the revenue system. The collection bill is advancing, and as the first of August is the term for the impost to commence, we have agreed to meet at ten in the morning. But though we have so many spurs to expedition, and we seem to feel some of them, yet our progress is very tedious. The bill was at first very imperfect. We labored upon it for some time, settled some principles, and referred it to a large and very good committee. They met, agreed upon principles, and the clerk drew the bill which they reported. We consider it in committee of the whole, and we indulge a very minute criticism upon its style. We correct spelling, or erase *may* and insert *shall*, and quiddle in a manner which provokes me. A select committee would soon correct little improprieties. Our great committee is too unwieldy for this operation. A great, clumsy machine is applied to the slightest and most delicate operations — the hoof of an elephant to the strokes of mezzotinto. I dislike the committee of the whole more than ever. We could not be so long doing so little, by any other expedient. In spite of it, however, I begin to flatter myself with the hope of an adjournment towards the end of August, which Heaven grant. I shall take my friend by the hand with new satisfaction.

I have expressed myself so peevishly in regard to the committee of the whole, that common justice will demand a further account of the House. There is the most punctual attendance of the members at the hour of meeting. Three or four have had leave of absence, but every other member actually attends daily, till the hour of adjourning. There is less party spirit, less of the acrimony of pride when disappointed of success, less personality, less intrigue, cabal, management, or cunning than I ever saw in a public assembly. The question of the President's power of removal seemed to kindle some sparks of faction, but they went out for want of tinder. Measures are so far from being the

product of caucusing and cabal, that they are not sufficiently preconcerted. Mr. Brown's amendment was such, and it had some effect to divide those whom zeal for the right interpretation of the Constitution had united into a corps. It was a good amendment. Some voted against it from the vexation they felt in having the ground changed.

I am in the House, and, finding this short piece of paper before me, I begun to write, almost by instinct, to you. When I can get another piece, I will write more. I attend at the same time to the debates, which are not of a nature to require a very strict attention.

No. 2. Thursday Evening, July 9.

I shall not be able to pursue my scribbling much further. The mail is just closing.

You may judge of the character of the House by knowing the classes, into which they may be divided.

Three sorts of people are often troublesome. The anti-federals, who alone are weak, and some of them well disposed. The dupes of local prejudices, who fear eastern influence, monopolies, and navigation acts. And lastly, the violent republicans, as they think fit to style themselves, who are new lights in politics; who would not make the law, but the people, king; who would have a government all checks; who are more solicitous to establish, or rather to expatiate upon, some high-sounding principle of republicanism, than to protect property, cement the union, and perpetuate liberty. "This new Constitution," said one Abner Fowler, in 1787, "will destroy our liberties. We shall never have another mob in the world." This is the republicanism of the aristocracy of the southern nabobs. It breaks out daily, tinctures the debates with the hue of compromise, makes bold, manly, energetic measures very difficult. The spectre of Patrick Henry haunts their dreams. They accuse the eastern people with despotic principles, and take no small consequence to themselves as the defenders of liberty. Now, my dear friend, you well know that I represent things rather too strongly. In fact, there is perfect good humor. Allow for my overdoing manner, and you will not be deceived by taking the substance of my account for fact.

Yours, affectionately.

No. 3. Continued.

A little time remains and I proceed. The three classes I have described are strong when united. This does not happen frequently. In all assemblies, the indolent class is numerous, though seldom strong. All these are combined and divided by chance, and seldom move in phalanx. It is pleasant to notice that the division is seldom by States. A large body is capable of a strong impulse, thinks less, and is more guided by its feelings, than a smaller. No *body* can think much, but our body thinks enough, or is in such a position as to be little susceptible of those strong impulses which carry most popular assemblies a great way, without stopping, in a right or wrong direction, as chance or party may happen to direct. We are more likely to hesitate, to temporize, to forbear doing what is right, or to do less than is right, than to usurp power, and to run riot. Our body is so small, as to partake of the senatorial caution and phlegm.

We are not in a hurry to act upon the case of Rhode Island and Vermont. It is not easy to say what is best, but if we knew, we should not readily act with decision. In addition to the obstacles which any measures, positively good or bad, would have to encounter, this would be retarded by the jealousy of a few, who consider those States as unfriendly to the removal to Philadelphia, and an accession to the eastern interest. Now I must finish.

Yours, once more.

Continued.

A little of the sourness of party has been produced by the great debate, respecting the President's power of removal. I cannot, with any prudence or propriety, become a critical reviewer of the characters of the leading men. There seemed to be, on both sides, a most sanguine belief of their creed. The talk was to the public rather than to each other. The public will probably think that the quantity is too great for curiosity, and too intricate and fine-spun for conviction. They will, as usual, lump the matter, and decide according to their feelings.

The House has again disagreed to the amendments to the impost bill, and chose a committee of conference. The tonnage bill is in the like state of conference. The favor

to nations in treaty, which the Senate are inflexibly opposed to, is the only bone of contention which will delay the passage of the bills. I do not apprehend any more debate, and little delay of either of them. The bill for collecting the duties, which was recommitted, will be reported to-morrow, and I trust will slide along with more celerity than it did at first. The Judiciary is before the Senate, who make progress. Their committee labored upon it with vast perseverance, and have taken as full a view of their subject, as I ever knew a committee take. Mr. Strong, Mr. Ellsworth, and Mr. Paterson, in particular, have their full share of this merit.

Now, my dear friend, I have said so much of the bills in detail, you would wish some remarks upon the nature of our transactions, &c., in the general.

There is certainly a bad method of doing business. Too little use is made of special committees. Virginia is stiff and touchy against any change of the committee of the whole. The language of the House is not very unlike that of the General Court, and the repugnance to principles, which our government people would support, is equally invincible. They are for watching and checking power; they see evils in embryo; are terrified with possibilities, and are eager to establish rights, and to explain principles, to such a degree, that you would think them enthusiasts and triflers. Yet there is not a deficiency of good sense and political experience; and I verily believe that almost every man, who impedes the movement of the government by these principles, is guided by pure motives. I have never seen an assembly where so little art was used. If they wish to carry a point, it is directly declared, and justified. Its merits and defects are plainly stated, not without sophistry and prejudice, but without management. I thought the manner of opposing the President's power of removal was artful, two or three days ago, but I now think that the very best method of trying their strength was blundered upon, and finally not perceived to be the best. There is no intrigue, no caucusing, little of clanning together, little asperity in debate, or personal bitterness out of the House. And yet it is very far from being a Roman Senate.[1] I must finish. Yours.

[1] This may be a proper place to mention, that among the questions debated was a proposition that the bill for a department of foreign affairs should be

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, July 23, 1789.

DEAR SIR, — I begin to feel some confidence in the approbation of our progress in business. It seems to have moved with more velocity than formerly. The judicial bill is to be taken up next Monday. If that should not occupy us longer than the spirit of fair inquiry may demand, we shall adjourn in six weeks. I dare not indulge the hope of it. We have had the amendments on the *tapis*, and referred them to a committee of one from a State. I hope much debate will be avoided by this mode, and that the amendments will be more rational, and less *ad populum*, than Madison's. It is necessary to conciliate, and I would have amendments. But they should not be trash, such as would dishonor the Constitution, without pleasing its enemies. Should we propose them, North Carolina would accede. It is doubtful, in case we should not. The agents of Vermont arrived here yesterday. New York has appointed commissioners to treat with them on that subject, which is right, but they erased a clause empowering them to quiet their possessions, which is wrong, and perhaps worse than doing nothing. *That* is the very difficulty with Vermont. A whole people cannot be dispossessed, — and as the land was actually bought, and by labor has become their own, it is not to be expected that they will suffer it to be taken away, or contested. I wish most earnestly to see Rhode Island federal, to finish the circle of union, and to dig for the foundations of the government below the frost.[1] If I did not check this emotion, I should tire you

limited to a few years. This proposition was advocated seriously, on the ground that all our intercourse with Europe would gradually be withdrawn, and in a few years there would be no occasion for any such department.

[1] The accession of Rhode Island to the Union was thus announced in the "Gazette of the United States," (a Philadelphia Newspaper,) of Wednesday, June 2d, 1790.

"New York. Monday afternoon arrived Sloop Rambler, Capt. Casey, from Newport, Rhode Island, who left that place on Sunday morning last.

"By the arrival of Capt. Casey, we have received the authentic information that the Convention of Rhode Island did, on Saturday last, adopt the Constitution of the United States by a majority of two. The yeas were thirty-four — the nays, thirty-two."

with rant. I am displeased to hear people speak of a State out of the union. I wish it was a part of the catechism to teach youth that it cannot be. An Englishman thinks he can beat two Frenchmen. I wish to have every American think the union so indissoluble and integral, that the corn would not grow, nor the pot boil, if it should be broken. I flatter myself that this country *will be* what China *is*, with this difference, that freedom and science shall do here, what bigotry and prejudice do there, to secure the government. For I believe that ignorance is unfavorable to government, and that personal freedom is useful to government, and government (and a braced one too) indispensable to freedom.

Sedgwick has come in, and orders me to quit writing. You know his arbitrary principles, — a spoiled child in the rebellion. So I must obey. But God bless you, King is Senator.

Your friend.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, August 12, 1789. — Thursday.

My Dear Friend, — I felt no kind of peevishness because you have long kept silence. I apprehended that you was ill, and intended writing to some Boston friend, to inform me by the first post. I am happy to find my fears groundless. Go on; enjoy your humor of writing or forbearing to write. I value your friendship too much to impose any burden upon you. Let my release of all epistolary demands annul your unjust rule, of requiring a hundred for one. The duty would operate as a prohibition. For though I might continue to value your favors at that rate, as in fact I do, I should not be able to pay for them.

We are beginning the amendments in a committee of the whole. We have voted to take up the subject, in preference to the Judiciary, to incorporate them into the Constitution, and not to require, in committee, two thirds to a vote. This cost us the day. To-morrow we shall proceed. Some Ge-

neral, before engaging, said to his soldiers, "Think of your ancestors, and think of your posterity." We shall make a dozen or two of rights and privileges for our posterity. If I am to be guided by your advice, to marry and live in Boston, it behooves me to interest myself in the affair. It will consume a good deal of time, and renew the party struggles of the States. It will set Deacon Smead and many others to constitution-making, a trade which requires little stock, and often thrives without much custom. The workman is often satisfied to be the sole consumer. Our State is remarkable for it. We made several frames of government, which did not pass. The timber was so green, the vessels rotted on the stocks. However, I am persuaded it is proper to propose amendments, without delay, and if the *antis* affect to say that they are of no consequence, they may be reproached with their opposition to the government, because they protested that the principles were important.

Our friend, Dr. Dexter, may be assured, that the collection law is considered as imperfect. Probably it will need some amendments, every session, these ten years, till experience has taught us how to guard, in the best possible manner, against the infinity of frauds which will be practised. Time at last pressed, and it was necessary to let the law take place with all its imperfections on its head.

A recess is proposed, and ardently desired. I think it a proper thing in itself, and expedient at this juncture. Deacon Smead will be pleased with the intermission of the members' pay.

I never said that I thought Mr. L.[1] should not accept as District Judge. I say he ought. I have my fears whether he will be asked to do it. If the Chief Justice should be Associate Judge, possibly Dana may be District Judge. Our excellent friend, Mr. L. merits every thing in that line. He has my fervent wishes in his favor. If any thing here looks inviting, I should wish to know your pleasure, and aid you in the attainment. Your brother Clarke perhaps would accept a clerkship in one of the great depart-

[1] Hon. John Lowell, whose appointment as Judge of the United States Court for the district of Massachusetts, was announced September 4, of this year.

ments. If so, he had better write to General Knox, and to Mr. Jay, and to the Secretary of the Treasury, when known. I will aid him with alacrity and zeal.

The mail is closing, and I must abruptly assure you that I am, affectionately,

Yours, &c.

P. S. The kingdom of the devil is not likely to be built up.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, September 3, 1789.

DEAR SIR,—You interest me by your account of the school politics of Boston. I will not give an opinion as to what ought to be done. The subject is important, and merits a more manly independency of conduct than you have described. These sneaking fellows are their own commentators. Art springs from fear, and that fear from weighing their own talents against other men's, and finding them wanting. I mean where the purpose is honest. For art is sometimes practised by able men. Then it is used to conceal the turpitude of the motive. I am sick of art. It requires too severe attention to keep it always guarded. And then the art of one is so overmatched by the art, and indeed by the simplicity of many, that it eternally miscarries. An honest, sincere conduct has to sustain an ordeal. The proudly mean are offended that a man dares to think and act in opposition to the *vox populi*. He appeals to the reasons for his conduct, and never acts without reasons. The same mean censurers will applaud his sense and firmness, and ever after leave him at liberty to act as he sees fit. Public clamor is employed as a means of effecting the removal of that resistance which the unpopular man makes to their will. When it is found that this end cannot be accomplished by such means, they will forbear. I would preach to the *pride* of these hunters after

popularity, and show how they degrade themselves, to their love of ease, and make manifest their needless painstaking; and to their cowardice, and evince the peril they incur. You will ask, And why do you preach to me? Forgive me. This is stuff, for a letter.

I believe that the New England people are better taught than any other, and Boston better than any other city. Since I have been here, I have thought of the advantage of our town corporations and town schools. I do not believe that any country has such judicious expedients for repelling barbarism, supporting government, and extending felicity. Boston might be an Athens, and I would wish to make it a London. *Apropos*, we are caballing about the permanent residence of Congress. The Pennsylvanians have made, or are about making, a compact with the southern people to fix it on the Potomac. They can carry this in the House if they think fit, and all unite from Pennsylvania southward. The Pennsylvanians abhor this in their hearts, but the terms are to remove the temporary residence of Congress to Philadelphia; and as the members east of the head of the Chesapeake outnumber the others, they are pretty sure of preventing the future removal to the Potomac. Mr. Morris, who wishes to fix at Trenton, disclaims and abhors the bargain. It is some proof of the nationality of his views. Possibly, however, it is the result of a more discerning selfishness. His opposition in the Senate will be weighty, and perhaps we may effect something in the House. The business is *in nubibus*, and in such dark intrigues, the real designs of members are nearly impenetrable. Reasoning will do no good. You will see, by the papers, what pace we move in the discussion of the judiciary bill. The question whether we shall have inferior tribunals, (except Admiralty Courts, which were not denied to be necessary,) was very formidably contested. Judge Livermore, and ten others, voted against them. You will see, in Fenno's Gazette, my speechicle on the subject. The lawyers will consider my idea of the exclusive nature of certain parts of the national judicial power (offences against statutes, and actions on statutes) in various points of light. If my distinction between *jurisdiction* and the *rule of decision* in causes properly cognizable in a State

Court should be clearly understood, they will have the means of judging on the merits of my argument. The idea is not easy to make clear, and I feel embarrassed to choose terms which will make my ideas as clear as I perceive them myself. However, the public has them, and I will not comment on them.

The Jersey election is decided in favor of the sitting member, by a large majority. The case, though confined to the construction of their State law, was very complex. I have seldom kept my mind in suspense till the vote was called. In this case, I remain still in suspense, inclining sometimes *pro*, sometimes *con*.

The recess will probably obtain at the time proposed, or very near it. You politicians in Massachusetts say that we are running away from duty. I think that some good will ensue, and considerable inconvenience be prevented by it. There is an interval between the organization of the government and the ordinary business, in which nothing should be done. We shall return in better humor than we should maintain together. We shall find business prepared by our great officers, and a weight given to national plans, which they have not at present.

It is now three o'clock, and we are debating about the permanent residence of Congress. The Pennsylvanians and southern people forced us, loath and supplicating delay, to take it up this day. Now, it turns out that the Pennsylvanians will not pursue the intended treaty with their intended allies, but actual and natural rivals. The former offer to fix it in Pennsylvania where the eastern people may choose, and to stay in New York, till the proposed place is prepared to receive the government. The minority, infinitely disappointed and chagrined, are begging delay, though they denied us, and to get one day, are talking the time out. Whose stomachs will conquer, I know not. I must seal this, because I expect to go out of town, to dine with the Vice. If so, I shall have no time to tell the event.

I think Judge Dana will be District Judge. It is only guess work. In any event my best wishes will attend you.

Your affectionate friend.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, September 6, 1789.

DEAR FRIEND, — This has been a week of incessant exertion, and this is not a day of repose. The world will wonder what inflames and busies Congress so much. Hear it. The eastern members had agreed that it was best to postpone the question of the permanent seat of government, and we had no doubt of being able to do it. We were deceived. All south of the Delaware had agreed to make Philadelphia the temporary residence, and the Potomac the permanent seat. To break this intrigue was then our and New York's object. We decided for the Susquehanna. The Pennsylvanians, though really divided, had agreed to act together, and in fact held the balance. After a day's deliberation, they complied with the proposition for the Susquehanna, and New York in the mean time. How they got clear of their allies is none of my business. Then the southerns, finding a majority against them, begged delay, though they had denied us. This was impossible, for Pennsylvania held the balance, and would have us fix in her limits. The minority, with great purity of virtue, exclaimed against the *bargain*, though observe, they had made one themselves, which failed; and now, failing in the committee of the whole, where our propositions for the Susquehanna passed, they make every exertion to embarrass and delay the business. To-morrow we resume the subject in the House, and as a minority is commonly well united, and this is violent, active, and persevering, and our majority is not perfectly agreed as to the place, I think there is some danger of our final defeat. The recess is less certain on account of this vile, unreasonable business. But a majority are resolutely bent on having one punctually on the 22d. The Judicial slumbers, and, when it shall be resumed, will probably pass, as an experimental law, without much debate or amendment, in the confidence that a short experience will make manifest the proper alterations.

I must close. My compliments attend Mrs. Minot. Accept my best wishes, and believe me to be, as I really am,

Your affectionate friend.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, January 13, 1790.

My Dear Friend, — I suppose you are beginning, this day, your General Court labors. I wish you may have nothing to record, which a real patriot would not wish to find on the journals. If the spirit of hostility should expire in our State, the new government will not have much opposition to fear from any other quarter. A Mr. Hawkins, a Senator from North Carolina, has arrived. The letter of the Virginia Senators, addressed to that State (Virginia) legislature, was not received with approbation, on account of the antifederal sentiments which it expressed. They would not even order it to be printed, and it was conveyed to the press by a private hand. I suppose you have read it. It seems intended to prevent the amendments giving satisfaction, more radical ones being wanting. Patrick Henry, it is said, advises all his partisans to support the Constitution, and if they wish to be secure against its supposed ill tendency, to get into the government. This is a very ancient mode of proving the faith by the practice. In this State all is quiet. The legislature is federal. The people get too much by the new government to wish it overthrown. I wish the parties in Massachusetts may not wage war again. The question of excise and assumption of State debts may possibly furnish the fuel for fresh heats. I think the assumption will be a serious article of our business in Congress. I wish, from our State, coöperation, not resistance. Our people pay great taxes. In this, and every other State, they are more moderate. They have not raised twenty-five thousand pounds in this State these three years. Their dry taxes are very trifling. Why should our industrious people be crushed, to pay taxes to maintain State credit, and without maintaining it, too, when the United States by excises, &c., equally imposed, can do it effectually? Will they love their fetters so well as to contend against the hand that would set them at liberty? To-morrow the budget is to be opened. The report of the Secretary will excite curiosity, and produce, as every great

object will, diversity of sentiment. How the business will issue, cannot be conjectured. I am positive there cannot be a safe and adequate revenue while the States and the United States are in competition for the product of the excises, &c. Wherefore the debts must be assumed.

I have written very dogmatically, and why should I affect doubts, when I entertain none? I am as dogmatical when I affirm that I am, with the esteem of my whole heart, your unfeigned friend, and humble servant.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, October 21, 1789.

My Dear Friend, — No private conveyance offering, this will go by the post. You see, by the date, that I am in Boston, which is busy with preparation and expectation. The President is to appear on a triumphal arch. The Governor[1] begins to take a part in the affair. The gout came so opportunely last Saturday, that it has been doubtful whether his humility would be gratified with the sight of his *superior*. Is it credible that doubts should have existed, whether *he* or the *President* should first visit? — that so much honor to one should be supposed to degrade the other? This *inter nos*. Some of his folks have thrown cold water on the ardor of the town, to no purpose. I wish you and all my Springfield friends may be gratified with the sight and conversation of the great and good President. God bless him.

. . . . . .

I am, my dear friend, affectionately yours.

[1] Hancock.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, October 30, 1789.

My Dear Friend, — I should be sorry to have any friend require of me an account of myself. Since my return from New York, I have seen many who were glad to see me, and many who were disposed to claim attention from me. I have dangled after the President, &c. He is gone, and I am glad of it, and I cannot find that I have done a single thing towards putting my affairs in a train to run away from them. Yet it is from such details, that I draw my excuse for not having written more particularly in my last, and for writing little now. I am going to Dedham to-day, and on Monday to Salem Court. I found it impossible to attend the Court in Middlesex. Ah, politics! how have they spoiled me for my profession. It is time, my friend, for me to consider what the noisy popularity of a public life will produce. It is a reward that wants value and permanency. Either I must become a mere politician, and think of my profession as a secondary matter, or renounce politics, and devote myself to the humble drudgery of earning bread. Pardon this egotism. You are not indifferent I think to the subject, and you will discern the risk of postponing the final decision, till the time when my head will be crazed with the chase, as other men's have been. No more of this.

Every-body, except Hancock and his tools, has been anxious to show more respect for the President, than he could find means to express. The good man has (I think) seen that the zeal for supporting government, and the strength, too, are principally on this side the Hudson. The Governor finally waited upon him. His friends say that he never doubted the point of etiquette, and that it was a mere falsehood invented to injure him. The popularity of the President seemed to bear every thing down, like a torrent. Comparisons are odious, they say.

When I took my pen, I did not imagine I was going to write such a letter as I have. I would burn it, but have not time to write one that would please me better. Take it as

the accidental effusion of an heart that would not hide even its follies from you. I think I shall not see you at Springfield till December. My respectful compliments to friends, particularly of your house.

With affectionate esteem, I am, dear sir,

Your friend and humble servant.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, March 23, 1790.

DEAR SIR, — You will wonder at the slumber which the report of the Secretary has enjoyed for more than a week; and still more at the business which has waked in its stead, the Quaker memorial.[1] The absence of Messrs. Fitzsimmons, Clymer, and Wadsworth, who vote with us for the assumption of the State debts, has produced a wish to have the report postponed till their return. Clymer is expected today, and Wadsworth at the end of the week. This is some excuse for the delay — but it is not for the violence, personality, low wit, violation of order, and rambling from the point, which have lowered the House extremely in the debate on the Quaker memorial. You will read in the papers sufficient to confirm this representation; but it is scarcely possible to secure, by any description, the full measure of contempt that we have deserved. The Quakers have been abused, the eastern States inveighed against, the chairman rudely charged with partiality. Language low, indecent, and profane has been used; wit equally stale and wretched has been attempted; in short, we have sunk below the General Court in the disorderly moment of a bawling nomination of a committee, or even of country (rather Boston) town-meeting. The southern gentry have been guided by their hot tempers, and stubborn prejudices and pride in regard to southern importance and negro slavery; but I suspect the wish to appear in the eyes

[1] Upon the slave-trade.

of their own people, champions for their black property, is influential — an election this year makes it the more probable; — and they have shown an uncommon want of prudence as well as moderation; they have teased and bullied the House out of their good temper, and driven them to vote in earnest on a subject which at first they did not care much about.

It remains to say something about the resolutions, which have been so many days in debate. They declare the Constitution in regard to the slave-trade, &c. I disapprove the declaring Constitution. It is risky; it is liable to error, by false reasoning, and to carelessness which will not reason at all. It is pledging Congress to dogmas which may be hereafter denied — it is useless, because it leads to no art. Upon the whole, I am ashamed that we have spent so many days in a kind of forensic dispute — a matter of moonshine. It is a question that makes the two southern States mad and furious.[1]

You will judge, my dear friend, how much of this is fit to be read to the club.

A motion was made just now by Mr. Madison, and decided by the yeas and nays, to enter the report of the committee of the whole House on the journals, — because it was understood that the subject would not be pressed further. But there did not seem to be much reason for it; for the whole discussion has been justified on two grounds; it was intended to form a result of the opinions on the points which were entertained, and to quiet the alarms, which have agitated the southern States, on account of the emancipation of the slaves. The opinion of the committee of the whole is sufficient for the first point, and public enough for the second purpose; and the insertion of dogmas relating to the constitution on the journals is in my opinion highly exceptionable and imprudent.

March 23, 1790. — Wednesday the 24th.

Another member from North Carolina is arrived — Mr. Ashe. We suppose that he will be against the assumption —

[1] South Carolina and Georgia.

though we are ignorant of his opinion.[1] The majority, till the return of the absent of our side, will be small. All our State, and all New England (except Livermore, who is not violent and perhaps may concur with us) will vote for the assumption. While the States discover more and more jealousy of the national government, it seems to be proper to secure it against the many dangers which threaten it, and the multitude of such as are now unforeseen and will arise when the present state of harmony shall be changed. Neglecting to do good will be doing evil. In any country, a public debt absolutely afloat, will produce agitation. How necessary then for us to act firmly and justly!

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, May 20, 1790.

My Dear Friend, — It is a long time since I have heard from you. I wish to be assured by your own handwriting, that you have escaped the influenza, or if not, that you are well over it. The most dismal accounts of the prevailing sickness of the people in Boston have been given here. Our friend, Dr. Dexter, I am told has been very ill, and is but half recovered. I hope this is not true. You are going to be busy soon with the General Court, and after that kind of duty shall have begun, I shall despair of getting a word from you.

All my letters from our State assure me that Congress is becoming unpopular, and losing confidence as well as reputation. The impatience of the creditors to have their debt funded without delay has been mingled with the murmurs of the *antis*. I think I can see the policy of the latter, in forbear-

[1] Mr. Ashe very soon put an end to all uncertainty on this point. Mr. Ames used to say that it was a very great convenience to himself that their names stood so near each other on the roll. He was always quite sure that he had voted right, if Mr. Ashe, who came next, voted the other way.

ing to complain of the assumption as a piece of usurpation, and making use of the angry creditors to help their cause against the government. I was lately made apprehensive that the creditors were going to agree on a memorial, praying that the debt might be immediately funded, whether the assumption should be agreed to or not. Such a step would have blown up the whole assumption, and probably the funding system with it. But that memorial seems to be laid aside, and I am glad of it. For the cause of assuming the State debts has derived aid from the opinion, that the advocates of that measure would not suffer it to be separated from the funding system; but if the creditors at Boston had expressed a willingness to submit to such a separation on any terms, the aid of those who have been lugged along, *vi et armis*, to approve of the assumption, would be withdrawn. We are now in committee on the bill for funding the debt, and debating about the old money. I am not sure that it is prudent to introduce it in this place. The success of any provision for the old money is problematical, and as it is now objected that it will delay and embarrass the funding business, it is attended with increased difficulty, to get the rate fixed at the scale of forty for one, which would confirm the promise made by the old government.

The assumption is not less to be hoped for than it has been for several weeks past. Mr. Sherman is indisposed, but in a day or two will renew his motion for assuming certain fixed sums. The success of it would be certain, if the Pennsylvania creditors were well disposed towards it. But they consider it as dividing their loaf with others, and they wish to have it all. I am surprised that men, who are to depend on government should be careless as to arguments, which seem to prove how much its strength will be impaired by a divided revenue system. They seem to be secure as to the permanency of the government, and mindful of nothing but the property of the debt. I hope we shall not finish the session without funding the whole debt; if not the whole, then as much as we can. For if we should not fund at all, I am apprehensive that the popular torrent, at a future session, would be found to be strong against funding. It might be said, we ought not to promise more than we know we

can perform ; that of consequence, temporary appropriations would be safe, and adequate to every purpose of justice, and the old game of preying upon the creditors would be played again. Without a firm basis for public credit, I can scarcely expect the government will last long. I own, my dear friend, I am sometimes ready to despond, when I think how great hazard attends those measures which are essential to its being. The President has been dangerously sick, and though much better, is still very weak. This circumstance has added something to our gloom. I hope in a few days, however, that I shall be able to say, the assumption is agreed to.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

New York, June 11, 1790.
In the Federal Hall.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

I am going this afternoon to visit Passaic Falls, in New Jersey, with a party, and I write now, because I wish you to know the events of this day by the next post, which I shall not return in due season to write.

You have seen that *we* are sold by the Pennsylvanians, and the assumption with it. They seem to have bargained to prevent the latter, on the terms of removing to Philadelphia. It became necessary to defeat this corrupt bargain. We had voted in the House for Philadelphia. The Senate disagreed. The motion being renewed in the House, we have opposed it, first so as to gain time, and next to baffle the scheme *in toto*. Yesterday it rained, and Governor Johnson, who had been brought in a sick bed to vote in Senate against Philadelphia, could not be safely removed in the rain. It was supposed, that if the resolve to remove could be urged through the House, and sent up while it continued raining, that it would pass in Senate. They

called for the question, but Gerry and Smith made long speeches and motions, so that the question was not decided till this morning. Rather than gratify the Pennsylvanians, and complete their bargain at the same time, *we* voted for Baltimore, which passed by two majority, to the infinite mortification of the Pennsylvanians. Philadelphia was struck out, and as, by the rules of the House, it could not be inserted again, it is a complete overthrow. But, my dear friend, we gain useless victories. I care little where Congress may sit. I would not find fault with Fort Pitt, if we could assume the debts, and proceed in peace and quietness. But this despicable grog-shop contest, whether the taverns of New York or Philadelphia shall get the custom of Congress, keeps us in discord, and covers us all with disgrace. How this resolve will fare in Senate, I know not. I trust the attempt will be made to turn it into a question of *permanent* residence. That would make the friends of the assumption the umpires, and enable them to dictate their own terms. I am, however, almost in despair of success. Yesterday it was moved in Senate to tack the assumption as an amendment to the funding bill. But Morris, Langdon, and another, declaring that they liked the assumption, said that they would not agree to it, as a part of that bill, lest the bill should be lost by it. Whereas the Pennsylvanians have both in their own power, and there is no ground for pretending danger to the bill, if *they* are disposed to vote for it. Their declaration is plain proof that Philadelphia stands in the way of the State debts. It is a shameful declaration for men to make, who have so solemnly asserted their zeal for the measure. Langdon is a partisan for Philadelphia. It is barely possible for any business to be more perplexed and entangled than this has been. We have fasted, watched, and prayed for the cause. I never knew so much industry and perseverance exerted for any cause. Mr. Sedgwick is a perfect slave to the business. Mr. Goodhue frowns all day long, and swears as much as a good Christian can, about the perverseness of Congress.

We are passing the ways and means bill. We do so little, and behave so ill in doing that, that I consider Congress as meriting more reproach than has been cast upon it.

I am gratified to know that your river is becoming important. I wish you could, by faith or otherwise, remove the rocks from its bed. I am pleased to find our General Court so much better than it was; but their sense, as expressed by their vote, will not help us to carry the assumption. It furnishes the others with a plea to delay, and get the sense of the other States, which would not be in the like strain.

My regards to friends. The first week of leisure, or rather of respite from urgent business, will carry me to Springfield.

I am, affectionately yours, &c.

The Pennsylvanians have hurried the removal of Congress, because (the) Rhode Island Senators are expected daily to join the New Yorkers.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

New York, June 23, 1790.

My Dear Friend, — I do not suppose you will wish my correspondence, while your duty in the General Court imposes so hard a task. However, you know that I do not pretend to exact an answer as a right.

I expect all the holders of securities in Boston will be alarmed, when they learn that on Monday the bill for excises, called the supply, or ways and means bill, was lost in the House, ayes twenty-three, noes thirty-five. Their anxiety will abate, when they know the circumstances that made it necessary to kill it. The perverseness of the Pennsylvanians has made them risk every thing for Philadelphia. One of them has often defied the friends of the assumption, to hinder the passage of the funding system. The Senate had become a scene of discord upon that subject, and

partly from aversion to all funding, and partly from a desire to show that refusing the State debts would make the terms of the other debt worse, they have excluded the alternatives, and offer a simple four per cent. to the creditor. This is playing Rhode Island with one third of the debt, and I cannot think of it without indignation. In short, it was becoming probable that the whole would be postponed to the next session. The negative upon the ways and means, by opening the eyes of the advocates of the funding to a sense of their danger, really contributes to the security of the provision for public credit. It is rather paradoxical, I confess. Besides, a scheme has been ripening, and is agreed upon between the Pennsylvanians and the southern people, to remove to Philadelphia, stay fifteen years, and fix the permanent seat on the Potomac. To do this, and at the same time reject the assumption, is such an outrage upon the feelings of the eastern people, as I persuade myself they dare not commit; — and as our claim of justice has been expressed in a loud tone, and our reproaches and resentments have been reiterated since it was denied us, they have become afraid of consequences; and as our zeal and industry have not relaxed, and every instrument of influence has been tried, I think I see strong indications of an assent to the assumption. Those who love peace, and those who fear consequences, will naturally shrink from any side, and however unavailing the debates may have been to procure votes, they have at last silenced opposition. And it is, at the same time, in itself gratifying and a presage of success, that the justice and policy of the assumption, except as it regards the *vox populi* in the south, are no longer denied, or denied so faintly as to indicate merely the repugnance of pride to yielding a contested point. Mr. Morris is a zealous friend of the assumption, (though he has acted crookedly,) and he has strong motives to prevent the convulsions which would ensue, if a bargain for Philadelphia should be supposed the cause of losing the measure. His own wishes, shame, prudence, will concur to exact from all whom he can influence a vote for it, and taking all these things together, I begin to indulge a very confident hope of success. I believe that Congress will sit next at Philadelphia, and if we

succeed in the assumption, we shall have nothing of bargain to reproach ourselves with. I confess, my dear friend, with shame, that the world ought to despise our public conduct, when it hears intrigue openly avowed, and sees that great measures are made to depend, not upon reasons, but upon bargains for little ones. This being clear, I should have supposed myself warranted to make a defensive or counter bargain, to prevent the success of the other. But even that would wear an ill aspect, and be disliked by the world. I repeat it, therefore, with pleasure, that we have kept clear of it.

I see by the papers that Mr. Gardiner's reform of the law is not quite extinct; but as our House is far better than the last, and the Senate absolutely federal, I hope no fresh disturbance will be given to the course of our judicial proceedings. Pray tell your brother Clarke, that I went to the President on his behalf, and made a strong representation of his losses and merits. The President is well disposed towards him, but I think he will not nominate him to the light-house, because Knox is there *locum tenens*. He will stand well for any vacant place. General Lincoln's vote would go far to serve him. Be so good as to say what I wish to have said to friends, Mr. Freeman, &c. My most respectful compliments to Mrs. Minot. Dear George, if you have leisure, and not else, write to me, for I have long been so vexed by the waves and storms of the political sea, as to wish, as much as the sailors do, for the port, and like them perhaps I shall be willing to quit it again.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

New York, June 27, 1790.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

Your fears are strong that we shall lose the assumption. Mine have been so, as I have often signified in my letters.

Now, I am pretty confident of a better issue to this long contest. Conviction seems at last to have (won) its way to men, whose prejudices seemed to have barred up the passage. We hear no more about the injustice of the assumption; at last, it is tacitly allowed that it will promote justice; and it is asked, let it rest till the next session, and then we shall doubtless assume. This looks like coming over. Besides, consequences are feared. The New England States demand it as a debt of justice, with a tone so loud and threatening, that they fear the convulsions which would probably ensue. Further, they are going to fix the residence permanently on the Potomac, and by the apostasy of Pennsylvania will do it, removing, however, immediately to Philadelphia, and staying there ten years. Two such injuries would be too much. They dare not, I trust, carry Congress so far south, and leave the debts upon us. R. Morris, too, is really warm for the assumption, and as he is the *factotum* in the business, he will not fail to insist upon the original friends of it, and who have ever been a majority, voting for it. With five Pennsylvanians, our former aid from that delegation, we can carry it, or least obtain four fifths of the debts to be assumed. Accordingly, they begin to say, these violent feuds must be composed; too much is hazarded, to break up in this temper. Maryland is the most alarmed, as well as, next to Virginia, most anxious for the Potomac. I am beginning to be sanguine in the hope of success.[1] This week may decide. If so, the next will carry me to Springfield. But while such immense objects are depending, at the very crisis too, you will see that I cannot desert, without being chargeable with a breach of duty, and taking a risk of consequences and a weight of reproach I ought not to bear with my own consent. Please to give me your opinion upon these circumstances.

[1] The proposition to assume the State debts failed at one time in the House; but on being revived, and connected with the proposition to remove the seat of government to Philadelphia, and after the expiration of ten years, to the Potomac, it prevailed by a very scanty majority. Mr. Jefferson says that this log-rolling connection of the two measures was arranged by an express agreement. Accordingly, two gentlemen, "with a revulsion of stomach almost convulsive," voted for the assumption; and this change of votes secured its passage.

. . . We shall adjourn soon. The impatience to get to Philadelphia will make it tedious to stay in New York, and others wish to see their families. Poor D. suffers the pains of a public man. I cannot think that George Cabot will serve. Dear friend, I am in haste, going to spend the day abroad; and, at the hazard of writing nonsense, I have scribbled what I wished you to know without delay.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

New York, July 11, 1790.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

To-morrow a committee will report in Senate in favor of the assumption, and on Tuesday I suppose it will be taken up. But we begin to relax in our sanguine hopes of success. It is plainly in our power. The game is in our hands. Last week the removal bill passed, in favor of Philadelphia and the Potomac. That encumbrance out of our way, it is not to be doubted that we could carry our long-contested point. But in Senate, some gentlemen advocate a simple four per cent. provision for the debt, making no compensation, as the Secretary has reported, for the two per cent. This has been agreed to as an amendment to the funding bill, which is still in that House. Several Senators, friendly to the funding and assuming, say that such a measure (four per cent. and no equivalent for the two per cent.) is against justice, against national policy, against eastern policy; for it is for giving, or rather throwing away, one third of the property now collected in the middle and eastern States, — disgraceful to the public, — weakens the attachment of individuals, &c.; — that if we can pay four per cent. now, we can pay two more in ten years. Even if we should fail, the evil would be foreseen and guarded against, and then we should have gained strength, and could bear it

better. Four per cent., though dishonest, affords no relief; it is an unnecessary anticipation of an uncertain contingency, &c., &c. I confess I incline to this opinion. The other is, that as we may fail ten years hence, it is better not to promise. This difference of opinion is becoming serious. Those who insist on the Secretary's proposals, say that unless assurances are given that these offers shall be made to the creditors, they will vote against the funding, assumption, and every thing connected with what they call so improper a plan. Neither party seems to advance towards accommodation, and it now seems inevitable, that the assumption will, on Tuesday, be rejected in Senate. Thus, my friend, we hope and fear — we then become sanguine, and then absolutely despair. I begin to fear that we are but fifteen years old in politics, which is the age of our nation since 1776, and that it will be at least six years before we become fit for any thing but colonies. We want principles, morals, fixed habits, and more firmness against unreasonable clamors.

I shall give you the vapors. I finish.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

New York, July 25, 1790.

My Dear Friend, — You have drawn an affecting picture of the distress of our amiable friends[1] on the departure of Mrs. B. I expected that the scene would call up all the father in the old gentleman. Ambition and the pursuit of property have no longer any allurements for him. His family concentres all his views, and the absence of M. narrows the circle of his enjoyments. Of course, it is a cruel privation. Your sympathy does you honor. Let me shun those who call it weakness.

Our politics have been critical the past week. The fund-

[1] The family of Colonel Worthington, at Springfield. The marriage of the eldest daughter to Mr. Bliss, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, had recently taken place.

ing bill having passed the Senate with amendments, on Friday the House took up the amendments, and instead of funding twenty-six dollars (on each hundred to be loaned) at the end of ten years, the House propose thirty-three and a third, at the end of seven years. The indents and interest on the debt of the United States to be raised from three per cent., as proposed by the Senate, and funded at four per cent. This being just, I wish it may pass in the Senate. Three per cent. seems to be abandoning all pretence of paying the creditors.

Yesterday we renewed the battle for the assumption — rather, we began it on Friday. Mr. Jackson[1] then made a speech, which I will not say was loud enough for you to hear. It disturbed the Senate, however; and to keep out the din, they put down their windows. Mr. Smith (S. C.) followed him, an hour. Yesterday, Mr. Gerry delivered himself. Jackson rebellowed. The motion by Jackson being that the House do disagree to the amendment of the Senate. Voted in the negative; thirty-two (not including the Speaker, who is of our side) against twenty-nine. Several motions were made to alter the sums to be assumed from the States, but were negatived. Thus, my friend, we again stand on good ground. We shall finish the amendments, I hope, to-morrow; and as they are not likely to be founded on improper principles, I hope the Senate will concur, and relieve us from a state of solicitude which has been painful beyond any I ever suffered.

I do not see how the bill can be lost, as both Houses have agreed to its passage; and though the amendments may not suit both, I will not fear that they will be agreed to in some form or other. We are impatient for the end of the session. Should all go smoothly, we shall sit till near the middle of August.

I must conclude with my affectionate regards to friends, and especially to you, for I am truly

Your friend and humble servant.

The Indian chief, McGillivray, is here. He is decent, and not very black.

[1] Of Georgia.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

New York, August 8, 1790.

My Dear Friend, — I have not replied to your friendly letters, because I have hoped to give you absolute assurance that I should quit this place next Wednesday. A bill is ordered to be reported, and will be to-morrow, for employing a million of dollars which we have to spare, for buying up the debt. This will restore a great sum to circulation; raise credit and the price of paper; make foreigners pay dear for what they may buy, or stop their buying; produce good humor among the creditors, and among the people, too, when they see the debt melting away; create a sinking fund of near eighty thousand dollars yearly, and, by a little management, of upwards of one hundred thousand. Objects so great and so popular carry away every personal consideration. I think such an act of vigor and policy would restore all the credit and regard that the government has lost. This bill may, and I fear will, detain us two days longer, but no new business will be touched. Wherefore I think that on Monday week at the latest, and perhaps on Friday next, I shall reach Springfield, and help you help our fair friends keep house. I despise politics, when I think of this office. I shall forget, though you hint at it, that I am a candidate, and am to be gibbeted in Edes's newspaper. I am in haste, and why should I write a great deal, and spoil my pleasant task of telling you all I know? Your friend, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 12, 1790.

Dear Friend, — Yesterday I took lodgings at the house of a Mrs. Sage, where I begin to enjoy quiet, and to feel settled and at home. I arrived in the city the last Sunday evening, and lodged at the Indian Queen, a tavern, where I found it diffi-

cult to write you. We had no sooner landed our baggage in the stage-office, a place adjoining the tavern, taken a dish of tea, &c., than we learned that the room where it was left was robbed. Mr. Oliver Phelps's and Mr. Dalton's trunks were taken away, containing their linen, Phelps's notes of hand for his new lands, his title deeds, twenty thousand dollars securities he had brought for a friend, eight or ten thousand of his own, with many papers valuable only to Phelps. Dalton had forty dollars, and a dozen shirts, &c. The next day, the two trunks, with many of Phelps's papers, including the greatest part of his securities, which were wrapped in a letter, and so eluded their search, were found in a field. We were disturbed by this misfortune, as you may suppose, and kept up almost all night. My name was on my trunk. The partial rogues took that as a mark, that nothing was to be got by taking it away. But see my good temper; I have not felt angry at the slight.

Both Houses were formed on the second day of the session. We have had the speech from the throne, have answered it, and to-morrow we are to present our answer. Both contain some divine molasses.

Mr. Jackson, of Georgia, yesterday let off a balloon about the treaty with the Creeks, complaining that the speech was silent on that topic, and that he should move very furiously for papers, and an address to the President to know whether there were any secret articles, &c. *Ruat cœlum, fiat justitia.* We wish for Sedgwick, and shall want him soon. Virginia is teeming, we hear, with antifederalism. The excise will be opposed, and any other proper mode of provision for the State debts will rub hard. These are my fears.

This is a very magnificent city. Our accommodations to meet, &c., are good.

This cold weather admonishes you, that you are losing time. Why will you remain a forlorn, shivering bachelor a minute longer? I could preach on this subject in a manner that would edify you and all other negligent sinners, if I was not at this moment obliged to wind off. *Sat sapienti verbum.* Think of these things.

Pray read Sedgwick's letter.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 23, 1790.

DEAR FRIEND, — I inclose, in two newspapers, the plan of a bank reported by Mr. Hamilton. The late surprising rise of public stock is supposed to be owing in part to this report, because it affords an opportunity to subscribe three fourths paper and one fourth silver into the bank stock. In Holland, we are told, our stock sells above par.

The creditors in this State have sent us a huffing memorial, which I inclose. It came in when the price of debt affords an answer to it. No notice was taken of it. The Senate, I hear, have proposed to answer them by resolving that a revision of the funding act is improper. Please to let Colonel Worthington see the inclosed. I wish to be made use of to furnish any thing from hence that may amuse my Springfield friends. Please to signify as much at that house.

I think the public will be delighted to see the public credit rise, the debt reduced by two hundred and seventy-eight thousand dollars, which cost only one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and still reducing more. The President has afforded them such evidence of our prosperous condition, as they will not controvert. I scribble in haste for the sake of inclosing the papers by this post. Instead of a letter, which I have not time to write, pray represent me at Colonel Worthington's.

The Senate have just voted, R. Morris only dissenting, in substance as I stated before. I wonder how the petitioners could overcome their Philadelphia modesty so far as to present such a . . . . . memorial. You may fill the blank for yourself.

Sedgwick arrived, and took his seat this morning.

Pray let me hear from you. Are you married?

Your friend.

P. S. Old Mr. Edes's paper accused me of keeping aristocratic company at New York. I obey the admonition of my constituent. Instead of Sedgwick, Benson, and other bad company, I now lodge with Gerry, Ashe, Sevier, and Parker. Birds of a feather.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 6, 1791.

DEAR FRIEND, — I inclose Judge Wilson's introductory law lecture, addressed with a propriety, which he says malice cannot question, to Mrs. Washington. I heard it, but have not had leisure to read it. Will you be so obliging as to present it to Colonel Worthington? The great law-learning and eminent station of the writer had raised great expectations of the performance. Whether there are not many parts that discretion and modesty, if they had been consulted, would have expunged, you will be at liberty to judge. It will be a frolic to the London reviewers to make the Judge's feathers fly. He has censured the English form of government, and can expect no mercy.

North Carolina is still in a ferment. They have rejected, by a very great majority, a proposition made in their Assembly for taking the oath to support the Constitution of the United States. You will see their resolves against their senators, and against direct and indirect taxes, in Fenno, which, as Fenno says on bad information, were not rejected by the Senate, except the preamble, and the word *monstrous* salaries was changed for enormous.

Before the Constitution was adopted by North Carolina, Robert Morris was sued there, his attorney ordered to trial without delay, and of course, judgment for ten thousand pounds against poor Bobby, as the New York boys used to call him. He filed, in their State Chancery Court, a bill, and obtained an injunction to stay the execution. In this stage of it, the Constitution was agreed to, and Mr. Morris ob-

tained from the federal Circuit Court a *certiorari* to remove the cause from the State Court. This the supreme judges of the State refused to obey, and the marshal did not execute his precept. The State judges, knowing the angry state of the assembly, wrote a letter of complaint, representing the affair. Whether the United States judges have kept within legal bounds is doubted. I should be sorry for an error of so serious a kind, and under such unlucky circumstances. Please to mention this affair to Colonel W. and to my friend H.

The excise bill is going forward smoothly. Mr. Jackson flamed forth yesterday, before the first paragraph was read. He was stopped to hear it out, and then he moved to strike it out, after a violent speechicle, which was not answered. Fifteen only voted with him. We hear nothing further about the treaty.[1] But that subject, the excise, the judicial quarrel, before mentioned, and the assumption, seem to keep the States of Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia, in a condition not unlike that of Naples when Vesuvius cuts capers.

. . . . . .

Yours, in haste.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 24, 1791.

DEAR FRIEND, —

. . . . . .

We should have passed the excise bill to be engrossed for a third reading, if for our trial, as all afflictions you know are, one of our Massachusetts members had not seen anti-republicanism in the clause giving the President power to assign compensation to the inspectors, &c., not exceeding five per cent. of the duties. The bugbear of influence gained by the Executive, of Constitution, because it would empower him

[1] Probably the treaty with the Creek Indians, before mentioned.

to establish offices, in effect, by fixing the pay, and forty other topics, were addressed *ad populum*. The clause was struck out, and a new bill, regulating the pay of inspectors, is to be brought in. The Secretary tells us, in his report, that the only practicable method in the first instance is to leave it to the President. But we are equal to things impracticable, and though time and information are wanting, we are going to undertake it. In the mean time, we are going on with the excise bill. Every effort is made to puzzle, by amendments crowded in and by debates upon them, to spin out the day and waste it. Hitherto we have beaten our adversaries, and I think we shall finally prevail, though the event is far from being safe. The southern people care little about the debt. They doubt the necessity of more revenue. They fear the excise themselves, and still more their people, to whom it is obnoxious, and to whom they are making it more odious still, by the indiscreet violence of their debates. Besides, they wish to seize the bill as a hostage for such a regulation of the bank, as will not interfere with Conococheague[1] ten years hence. They wish to limit its term to ten years, or to provide that its stock shall be removed with the seat of government.

On a late debate on the bill to provide what officer shall act as President, when the two first offices shall be vacant, the ambition of Mr. Jefferson's friends was disclosed. They contended for him with zeal. That will have its share in the business of the session. All this is *inter nos*. But rely on this, my friend, no compromise will be made by trucking off one thing for another. If the government cannot be supported without foul means, let it go.

The Pennsylvania assembly has voted in the lower House against an excise. It was awkward to see the excise debating in two places at once, as the case actually happened. Is not this anarchy? The State governments seem to beat their drums, and to prepare to attack us. We have many advantages over them, and they have several over us. But appear-

[1] The name of a stream entering the Potomac in the westerly part of Maryland. Those who were malecontent with the scheme of removing the seat of government, in 1801, to the banks of the Potomac, revenged themselves by giving the name of Conococheague to the proposed capital.

ances indicate that the superiority of the one to the other will be brought to the test. I hope the Massachusetts General Court will not incite the people to any further clamor. Our State has got relief, and that is the pretext for the noise in the southern States. I must finish.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 7, 1791.

My Dear Friend, — I am in the House, and have not your last favor before me. You express a doubt with regard to the time of your going to heaven. I expect to return in March, and possibly I may be in Springfield at the time of your ascent. I shall be happy to be a spectator of your metamorphosis, or, as you will call it during the first moon, your apotheosis. Congress will certainly adjourn on the third of March. I shall pass three or four days in New York, and then make haste to Springfield. The prospect is a very grateful one to my mind, especially if I am to get a piece of the wedding cake.

I am now hearing Mr. Giles, of Virginia, preach against the bank. Mr. Madison has made a great speech against it. I am not an impartial judge of it. Take my opinion with due allowance; — it is, that his speech was full of casuistry and sophistry. He read a long time out of books of debates on the Constitution when considering in the several States, in order to show that the powers were to be construed strictly. This was a dull piece of business, and very little to the purpose, as no man would pretend to give Congress the power, against a fair construction of the Constitution.

All appearances indicate that we shall beat them by a considerable majority. This will not happen till the quantum of speeches is exhausted, which I expect will take place to-morrow.

You must excuse me now for making a short letter of this. Did I send Colonel Worthington a copy of the report of the Attorney-General? If I did not, I will.

Please make my respectful compliments to your good family, and elsewhere.

Your affectionate friend.

Monday Evening.

It is hoped that we shall take the question on the bank to-morrow; though, as Mr. Madison discovers an intention to speak again, and several others appear charged, I think the chance is against the question till Wednesday. Our time is precious, because it is short. We sit impatiently to hear arguments which guide, or at least change, no man's vote.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, February 17, 1791.

My Dear Friend, — It gave me great pleasure to receive a line from you, after so long an interruption of our correspondence.

I am sure that our mutual regard has not suffered any interruption at all. My own sentiments will not suffer me to doubt of yours. I shall take pleasure in serving you or your friends. The letter inclosed in yours, and the interests of your brother, shall be attended to.

We have been occupied a long time with the debate on the bank bill. Mr. Madison has made a potent attack upon the bill, as unconstitutional. The decision of the House, by a majority of thirty-nine against twenty, is a strong proof of the little impression that was made. Many of the minority laughed at the objection deduced from the Constitution.

The great point of difficulty was, the effect of the bank law to make the future removal of the government from this city to the Potomac less probable. This place will be-

come the great centre of the revenue and banking operations of the nation. So many interests will be centred here, that it is feared that, ten years hence, Congress will be found fast anchored and immovable.

This apprehension has an influence on Mr. Madison, the Secretary of State,[1] as it is supposed, and perhaps on a still greater man. The bank law is before the President.

The excise act is before the House. Some amendments have been proposed by the Senate. I do not apprehend that the bill will be lost, — though, as our senators voted against it, the adversaries of the bill are encouraged with the hope of destroying it in the House. They will try to spin out the time, which is short. We are to adjourn on the 3d March. The Boston distillers have sent us a letter, expressing their apprehension that the duties of the excise bill will injure their business. Our senators, not being able to effect any alteration, chose to give their votes in the negative, as the strongest testimony of their disapprobation of the rate of duties. This is what I understand to be their motive.

What are you about in the General Court? Will you join the complaining States, and pass censuring votes against Congress? How came the Captain to push for a seat so hard in the General Court? It is a small object to him; but such formal disputes concerning the dangerous influence of the United States Government and its officers, give some disturbance to the public, at a time when it seems to be uncommonly tranquil.

This session of Congress has passed with unusual good temper. The last was a dreadful one. In public, as well as in private life, a calm comes after a storm. When I return, which will be in March, I shall try to turn out of my head all the politics that have been huddled into it, and to restore the little scraps of law which I once hoped to make a market of.

The newspaper sometimes gives a sad character of lawyers. I hope *you* are not so very vile as Adams's paper describes the *order*.

You perceive when the abuse of the order is in question,

[1] Jefferson.

I say *you.* I shall be very willing to take my share of the abuse, on the terms of having my share of the profits of the trade.

Pray remember me to the gentlemen of the club.

Your affectionate friend.

Excuse haste, for I cannot wait to read over what I have written.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, April 16, 1791.

DEAR SIR, — I presume you had my letter from Hartford, which informed you that I was going to Philadelphia. The date of this will announce to you that I have returned. My journey was a rapid but not unpleasant one. Such continued exercise is good for a lazy fellow, as your humble servant's good health testifies. I returned from New York, by water, to Providence, which deprived me of the pleasure of visiting you and my other friends at Springfield. I hope you are married, and should have enjoyed a great deal of satisfaction in attending the ceremony.[1] Allow me to *salute* the bride, and to offer my fervent wishes for your mutual felicity. Pray assure *the worthy family*, as well as your household, of my respectful attachment. After taking some measures to establish myself in business here, I shall not fail to visit your town. The law courts will detain me several weeks. But I hope to see the trees in blossom on my journey. I am going to be connected with Jo Hall. The office is in State street. I shall try to forget politics, and to like the drudgery of an office. I think I have fully explained to you heretofore the manner in which I intend to dispose of myself during the recess of Congress, and my

[1] Mr. Dwight's marriage occurred about this time.

joint concern in the law way with Mr. Hall. My friends here approve this connection, as promising mutual advantage.[1] . . . .

I am, dear sir, your friend, &c.

I will send, if I can, Burke's famous pamphlet to Colonel Worthington.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, April 26, 1791.

DEAR SIR, —

. . . . . .

People here seem to care as little about politics, as I think you do at this moment. There is a scarcity of grievances. Their mouths are stopped with white bread and roast meat. Our worthy Governor is again ill, laid up with the gout. I hope you will bear it, and all other public calamities, with a patriotic firmness. Some murmurs are whispering, because Congress has not begun to quarrel with England on account of navigation. Men are more true to their passions than to their interests. What we have is great, and what we may hope is immense; yet many are ready to put all to the hazard, by a war of regulations with that country.

Farewell. Believe me your affectionate friend.

I am almost, not quite, fixed in this town.

[1] In a letter dated Boston, May 11, 1791, he says: — "I opened my office last Monday, and am not so hurried with business as to deny myself the pleasure of writing to you. My office is in King street, next door to the custom-house."

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

May, 1791.

If I can make a rebellious report on Harmer's trial lie peaceably in a sheet of folio paper, I will send it you by this post. Please to communicate it, with my respects, to the worthy old gentleman, whom God bless. Considering your captainship, there is a propriety in your having it. You will learn to respect the militia, that bulwark of a free country, as the cant is.

Probably the remainder of the State debts will be assumed. Opposition will be made; but I think there is a good prospect of success.

We have cause to lament the Indian war. Neither ambition, nor the thirst for revenge, nor the desire of their lands, kindled it. The government has been mild, patient, and assiduous in the use of every means of keeping peace, in vain.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, October 30, 1791.

DEAR FRIEND, — After enduring weariness, cold, watching and hunger, (that is, between meals,) — after perils in the stages and ferry-boats, in darkness and snow-storms, — I am (what a sinking in style) very well, by the fireside. You have been sleeping in clover — I do not mean in the barn, neither — while I have scarcely slept at all on my journey. So it is, that the drivers ease their horses by tiring the passengers. They do not drive fast, but they are a great many hours performing their task. The horses are shifted, but the poor traveller is kept harnessed. And yet, hard as the sufferings of a stage-coach are, the man who describes them

in the tragedy style gets laughed at. The unfeeling world would deny me their pity, if I was to ask it. I will not give them the opportunity.

The first arrangements of the bank have passed over smoothly. Though mutual jealousies were felt, yet all parties saw and yielded to the necessity of harmonizing. Preparations are making, with all possible speed, for the circulation of the bills, and the discounting of notes. Yesterday, McKean, of South Carolina, was appointed cashier. He is a man of genteel manners and fair character. Mr. Francis, cashier of the old bank, is very much of the bear, and yet was strenuously supported for the office in the Bank of the United States. The stock of the bank is chiefly held in New York and Massachusetts. This is a favorable circumstance in the outset. I trust it will have the more of a national cast on that account.

Politics is yet asleep. Business is preparing in Congress; but nothing has indicated that degree of turbulence which marked the former sessions. Pray let me hear from you often. Farewell.

Your friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, November 22, 1791.

Dear Friend, — In some of my reading, I have met with a sentiment to this effect: the happy are very apt to forget those who are not so. To apply it, you are married. You enjoy the social chat. You live with those whom you love and esteem, and who have the like sentiments towards you. I, forlorn wight, am the fellow-lodger of the five North Carolinians. I am a banished man, and my old friends will not cheer my exile with a letter of condolence. . . .

I have made a trip to Bethlehem, fifty-eight miles from hence. I saw as many ugly women and girls, with close caps, a little puffed at the ears, as you could well imagine

together; possibly two hundred. They seem to be a humane, well-regulated little community. I may give you some further account of them on some future occasion. Morse's Geography is said to contain a just description of their tenets and social economy. At one George Vogel's tavern, on the road, I noticed a piece of taste, which you may imitate, if you should think proper. He was once a tailor in this place: becoming bankrupt, he keeps tavern, thirty miles out. There was hung up, glazed, framed, and gilt, his commission as ensign in the fourth company of the fourth battalion of foot of the Philadelphia militia. But it seems merit is sure of its reward; for, turning to the other side of the room, another picture announced that Mr. Vogel was become a lieutenant in the same company. I paid my reckoning with due respect for my landlord. I knew the merit of one of my friends,[1] and the influence of his wife at the Governor's, so well, that I should not despair of his being able to cover his walls with his glory. It would be bearing his honors thick about him. Having done with Mr. Vogel, I have consumed the time I had to write, and conclude, in the style of our country. Yours to serve.

Respectful compliments to your (better) half.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, November 30, 1791.

DEAR MINOT, — The inclosed epistle, having grown into an immoderate length, is submitted to your discretion, after perusal, to be read in whole or in part to the club, or single members of it, according to your idea of expediency. Gore, towards whom I have no reserves, may, if you choose, read the whole. The actual state and the true cause of southern discontent are better known at Boston than the

[1] Mr. Dwight was an officer in the Massachusetts militia.

degree of it. Congress and the British Parliament are viewed alike, and equally foreign to them, equally false and hostile to liberty, tyrannical and rapacious, taxing one thing after another, and going on narrowing their rights and enjoyments, till air only will be free.

You will think me hypochondriac. I own I sometimes lose my spirits when fresh evidence is given of the truth of what I have written. All that may happen may fail; and even at the worst, the mischief might be repelled by force, or soothed by prudence. That is another affair. I write what I believe. There is, indeed, no counting the numbers of the discontented, for in such cases the satisfied are silent, and are not counted. Making all these statements and reserves, you will not mistake the impression under which I write.

Your conjecture in regard to the bench is curious; but I was not unprepared for it.

My respects, &c., to Mrs. Minot, and friends Freeman, Dexter, &c.

Your friend, &c.

The following is the "inclosed" referred to in the above letter.

Philadelphia, November 30, 1791.

Dear Sir, — I am solicitous to keep alive the remembrance of me with my friends. Congress is so little minded in the transaction of the business of this session, that I must not confide in my drawing their attention, as a spoke in the political wheel. Therefore, I will make continual claim to your notice, whenever I begin to apprehend being forgotten, to such a degree as to overcome my lazy habits, and the difficulty arising from the dearth of matter.

The spirit of debate bears no proportion to the objects of debate. It may be a question with moral observers, which most inflames the zeal of members, the magnitude of the consequences which a measure will produce, or the sensibility to the contradiction of their opinions. I decide nothing on this delicate subject. But in fact several debates have

arisen, like thundergusts in a pleasant day, when no Mr. Weatherwise would have guessed it. The ratio of representation seemed to me, beforehand, as pacific a question as any public assembly ever slumbered over. But though the difference of opinion was narrowed within the limits of one to thirty or thirty-four thousand, yet eloquence, so long weary of rest, seemed to rejoice in the opportunity of stretching its limbs. We heard, and no doubt, if you had patience, you have read, about republicanism, and aristocracy, and corruption, and the sense of the people, and the amendments, and indeed so much good stuff, that I almost wonder it did not hold out longer. We have disputed about a mode of trying the disputed election of Generals Wayne and Jackson. To be serious, my friend, the great objects of the session are yet untouched; but the House, especially the new members, have been very often engaged in the *petite guerre*.

Instead of facts, I will notice to you, that the remark so often made on the difference of opinion between the members from the two ends of the continent, appears to me not only true, but founded on causes which are equally unpleasant and lasting. To the northward, we see how necessary it is to defend property by steady laws. Shays confirmed our habits and opinions. The men of sense and property, even a little above the multitude, wish to keep the government in force enough to govern. We have trade, money, credit, and industry, which is at once cause and effect of the others.

At the southward, a few gentlemen govern; the law is their coat of mail; it keeps off the weapons of the foreigners, their creditors, and at the same time it governs the multitude, secures negroes, &c., which is of double use to them. It is both government and anarchy, and in each case is better than any possible change, especially in favor of an exterior (or federal) government of any strength; for that would be losing the property, the usufruct of a government, by the State, which is light to bear and convenient to manage. Therefore, and for other causes, the men of weight in the four southern States (Charleston city excepted) were more generally *antis*, and are now far more turbu-

lent than they are with us. Many were federal among them at first, because they needed some remedy to evils which they saw and felt, but mistook, in their view of it, the remedy. A debt-compelling government is no remedy to men who have lands and negroes, and debts and luxury, but neither trade nor credit, nor cash, nor the habits of industry, or of submission to a rigid execution of law. My friend, you will agree with me, that, ultimately, the same system of strict law, which has done wonders for us, would promote their advantage. But that relief is speculative and remote. Enormous debts required something better and speedier. I am told that, to this day, no British debt is recovered in North Carolina. This, however, I can scarcely credit, though I had strong evidence of its truth. You will agree that our immediate wants were different — we to enforce, they to relax, law. The effects of these causes on opinions have been considerable, as you will suppose. Various circumstances, some merely casual, have multiplied them.

Patrick Henry, and some others of eminent talents, and influence, have continued *antis*, and have assiduously nursed the embryos of faction, which the adoption of the Constitution did not destroy. It soon gave popularity to the *antis* with a grumbling multitude. It made two parties.

Most of the measures of Congress have been opposed by the southern members. I speak not merely of their members, but their gentlemen, &c., at home. As men, they are mostly enlightened, clever fellows. I speak of the tendency of things, upon their politics, not their morals. This has sharpened discontent at home. The funding system, they say, is in favor of the moneyed interest — oppressive to the land; that is, favorable to us, hard on them. They pay tribute, they say, and the middle and eastern people, holders of seven eighths of the debt, receive it. And here is the burden of the song, almost all the little that they had and which cost them twenty shillings for supplies or services, has been bought up, at a low rate, and now they pay more tax towards the interest than they received for the paper. This *tribute*, they say, is aggravating, for all the reasons before given; they add, had the State debts not been assumed

they would have wiped it off among themselves very speedily and easily. Being assumed, it has become a great debt; and now an excise, that abhorrence of free States, must pay it. This they have never adopted in their States. The States of Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia are large territories. Being strong, and expecting by increase to be stronger, the government of Congress over them seems mortifying to their State pride. The pride of the strong is not soothed by yielding to a stronger. How much there is, and how much more can be made of all these themes of grief and anger, by men who are inclined and qualified to make the most of them, need not be pointed out to a man, who has seen so much, and written so well, upon the principles which disturb and endanger government.

I confess I have recited these causes rather more at length than I had intended. But you are an observer, and I hope will be a writer of our history. The picture I have drawn, though just, is not noticed. Public happiness is in our power as a nation. Tranquillity has smoothed the surface. But (what I have said of southern parties is so true that I may affirm) faction glows within like a coal-pit. The President lives — is a southern man, is venerated as a demi-god, he is chosen by unanimous vote, &c., &c. Change the key and . . . You can fill up the blank. But, while he lives, a steady prudent system by Congress may guard against the danger. Peace will enrich our southern friends. Good laws will establish more industry and economy. The peculiar causes of discontent will have lost their force with time. Yet, circumstanced as they are, I think other subjects of uneasiness will be found. For it is impossible to administer the government according to their ideas. We must have a revenue; of course an excise. The debt must be kept sacred; the rights of property must be held inviolate. We must, to be safe, have some regular force, and an efficient militia. All these, except the last, and that, except in a form not worth having, are obnoxious to them. I have not noticed what they call their republicanism, because having observed what their situation is, you will see what their theory must be, in seeing what it is drawn from. I have not exhausted, but I quit this part of the subject. In fine, those three States are circumstanced not unlike our State in 1786.

I think these deductions flow from the premises: That the strength as well as hopes of the union reside with the middle and eastern States. That our good men must watch and pray on all proper occasions for the preservation of federal measures, and principles. That so far from being in a condition to swallow up the State governments, Congress cannot be presumed to possess too much force to preserve its constitutional authority, whenever the crisis, to which these discontents are hastening, shall have brought its power to the test. And, above all, that, in the supposed crisis, the State partisans, who seem to wish to clip the wings of the union, would be not the least zealous to support the union. For, zealous as they may be to extend the power of the General Court of Massachusetts, they would not wish to be controlled by that of Virginia. I will not tire you with more speculation; but I will confess my belief that if, now, a vote was to be taken, 'Shall the Constitution be adopted,' and the people of Virginia, and the other more southern States, (the city of Charleston excepted,) should answer instantly, according to their present feelings and opinions, it would be in the negative.

These are dangers which our Massachusetts parties probably do not know, and have not weighed, and I shall hope that if they should be brought to view them in as alarming forms as it is an even chance they will, we shall have there but one sentiment. We ought to have but one. My paper is out, so farewell.

Your affectionate friend, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 9, 1791. — Friday evening.

My Dear Friend, — The mail for the eastward will not go hence till Tuesday next. I write by a private hand as far as New York. There my letter will take the mail for you.

I would not delay till the regular post day, to inform you of the disaster to our army at the westward. The authority, though not official, being indisputable, I proceed to tell you, that General St. Clair, being with (fame says) twelve or fourteen hundred men about ninety miles from Fort Washington, was surrounded by the Indians, drew up in a hollow square, the cannon and baggage in the centre, and was attacked by a greatly superior force of Indians. It was not a surprise, for the men lay under arms all night. The attack was made at four in the morning, with unexampled fury. The militia broke; the cannon were taken; the General was surrounded, and rescued by a party of the regulars with fixed bayonets. The cannon were retaken, but were not of use, all the artillerymen being killed. At nine in the morning, our men broke, and were pursued five miles; fled thirty miles to a little new fort, called Jefferson, where, it is said, a garrison and the wounded are since invested. It is reported that General St. Clair has reached Fort Washington; but Fort Jefferson, and the first regiment, said not to have been with the main body, are in danger, perhaps lost. Kentucky was up in arms to save the remnant. St. Clair behaved well, and, though defeated, is not reproached.

On reading the account of killed, &c., you will lament the names you will see on the list.

Killed — General Butler, Colonel Oldham, Majors Brown, Hart, Clark, Ferguson; Captains Bradford, Upton, Smith, Newman, Phelan, Kirkwood, Price, and three others; Lieutenants Winslow, Warren, Spear, and eight others; Ensigns Bentley, Cobb, Balch, Brooks, and five others; three Quartermasters.

Wounded — Colonel Gibson, cannot live; Colonel Darke, Major Butler, cannot live; thirteen Captains, among them Greaton, of Roxbury, and six hundred privates.

The news probably comes at its worst, but the truth is doubtless bad enough. Farewell.

Yours, &c.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, December 23, 1791.

DEAR FRIEND, — Though my former letters have expressed indifference to the debate on the ratio of representatives, yet at last the violent injustice of the bill became so manifest, as to overcome all my moderation. Representatives and taxes are to be apportioned among the several States, according to their respective numbers. Giving representatives to the States not according to their numbers, is no apportionment, but a flagrant wrong, and against the words and principles of the Constitution.

This was done by the bill. The whole number of representatives being one hundred and twelve, an apportionment of these to Virginia, according to her numbers, would give that State nineteen members. Yet the bill gave her twenty-one. What did we Yankees do but mount the high horse, and scold in heroics against the disfranchisement of the other States? The Senate amended the bill from thirty to thirty-two thousand for a member, which latter produces a more equal apportionment. The House disagreed, the Senate insisted, and finally both houses adhered, and so the bill died, and I am glad of it. We have to begin again.

Major Thomas Pinckney, of South Carolina, a man of excellent character, is nominated Minister at the Court of London; Gouverneur Morris at the Court of France; Mr. Short at the Hague.

. . . . . .

Will you do me the favor to send me, by the first post, one of your histories of the rebellion. It is not to be had here. I want it for young Mr. Thornton, the secretary to the English Minister, a worthy young man, to whom I have spoken about you and your book. He wishes to see it.

I am, dear friend, affectionately yours, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 13, 1792.

DEAR FRIEND,—

. . . . . .

I believe that the war will be pursued against the Indians; that the public will be made to see that the charges of violence and oppression on the part of the United States, the disturbance of the Indian possession of their lands, and a hundred others, are Canterbury tales. Little of the cause, the history, the object, or the prospect of this confounded war have been known abroad. Those who knew nothing, wished to know, and of course believed, a good deal. A good deal has been offered them to believe. The foes of government have seized the occasion, a lucky one for them. The foes of the Secretary at War[1] have not been idle. Even the views of the western people, whose defence has been undertaken by government, have been unfriendly to the Secretary at War, and to the popularity of the government. They wish to be hired as volunteers, at two thirds of a dollar a day, to fight the Indians. They would drain the Treasury. They are averse to regulars. Besides, it looks not only like taking the war out of the hands of the back settlers, but so many troops there will look as if government could not be resisted, and the excise perhaps would be less trifled with. All these, and many other causes, have swelled the clamor against the war. A strong post at the Miami village would protect a long frontier, and curb the Indians, by placing an enemy behind them, when they attack the settlements. This attempt has been twice made without success. The late season, the grass having failed, so that the horses wanted fodder, the bad discipline of the troops, and the extra number of the Indians beyond what was expected, seem to be the causes of the disaster. A greater force, better disciplined, at an earlier season of the year, with a due proportion of horse and riflemen, could not fail of taking a strong post. That being effected, parties could be fed and rested at the post, would then be safe, and

[1] General Knox.

could rush out suddenly, and keep the Indians always in alarm and in danger. We should exactly change conditions. So much for war. You will not (freely) speak of what I write.

Before this time, the *Anakim* is a judge, or a martyr to his chagrin.

Though I have blotted a sheet of paper, I am in a hurry. Therefore I conclude.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 23, 1792.

My Friend, —

. . . . . .

The business of Congress is not unimportant. Yet our progress in despatching it affords no good omens. A popular assembly is good to deliberate, and so good at that as to exclude every other occupation. I fear that we shall only deliberate and not act. I do not believe that the hatred of the Jacobites towards the house of Hanover was ever more deadly than that which is borne by many of the partisans of State power towards the government of the United States. I wish I could see in Congress a spirit to watch and to oppose their designs; but we are surrounded by men who affect to think it a duty, and who really think it popular, to take part with those who would weaken and impede the government. The hour of victory is dangerous. The federalists have triumphed; they have laid their own passions asleep; they have roused those of their adversaries. I do not like our affairs. You will think me a croaker. Be it so. I see how much power this government needs, and yet how little is given; how much is done and contrived against it; how much it ought to do, and yet how little it does, or is disposed, or capable, to do; how few, how sleepy, how obnoxious its friends are, and how alert its foes. An immense mass of sour matter is fermenting at the southward.

Every State government is a county convention. My pen needs mending; that gives me time to break off this endless theme.

The mad bank schemes of New York produce ill effects. Sober people are justly scared and disgusted to see the wild castle-builders at work. It gives an handle to attack the government.

What will you say of a new recruiting service, to fight the Indians? How will your wise ones approve it? You who watch for government among the people, should throw a few soothing paragraphs into the papers.

In future, I think government will move with strength and caution, so that the Indians shall be bridled effectually. Compliments to your *cara sposa*. That is Latin for honey. Regards to other friends.

Yours, affectionately.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 30, 1792.

DEAR FRIEND,—

. . . . . .

After a day's, or rather part of a day's, open debate on the bill for augmenting the military establishment to five thousand two hundred and sixty-eight men, the doors were shut to read some papers, intrusted to the House by the President, and have not since been opened to discuss that subject. As the papers sent from the President were expressly in confidence, it was improper to open the doors at all, though perhaps the impression on the public would not be worse for their being possessed of the *pro* and *con* of the argument. I am convinced that the war is a misfortune to the government, and attended with a loss of cash and glory, and of the popular good humor. Still, I insist that government may plead not guilty to every article of the newspaper charges against it. General Knox, by the President's direction, has caused a memorial stating the causes of the war to be published, which you will see.

Some think that the Constitution is to be administered, as writs were formerly put to the test, by captious pleas of abatement. They say Congress has not authority to allow a bounty to the cod-fishery, nor to the encouragement of manufactures. This is the Virginia style. It is chiefly aimed at the report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the subject of manufactures.

Respects and compliments to friends.

Your friend, &c.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, February 16, 1792.

My Dear Friend, — Accept the congratulations of a friend on your appointment to the Probaty.[1] You will not need many words to convince you that I rejoice in an event, which seems to secure you a good, though not an ample, provision. I hope you will pursue your literary labors. Your own fame, and that of our country, demand it.

An attentive observation of the events which fate is preparing for us, is one of the duties of an historian as well as of a citizen. You may see them in the embryo. I cannot believe that we are out of the woods. Success is poison to party zeal. The friends of the United States government have applied themselves to spending their six per cents. The opposers are industrious, watchful, united. On every side, it seems to me, theory denotes that we are going retrograde. Instead of making a government strong enough to dare to be firm and honest, we seem to be afraid that it is too strong, and needs unbracing and letting down. The States are advised to oppose Congress. Consolidation is a bugbear which scares not only those who are in the dark, as might be expected, but those in the broad daylight. Facts refute this pretence of a progressive encroachment on the State powers. Even in Congress, the States seem to bear a

[1] Mr. Minot was about this time appointed Judge of Probate for the county of Suffolk.

major vote. No act has gone beyond federal limits — many important ones have stopped far short. The States, on the other hand, keep up an almost incessant siege; there is scarcely an article which some of them have not co-legislated upon. With such means of carrying their sense and nonsense home to the great body of the people, it is not only easy to beat Congress, but it is hard for them not to beat, unless the men of sense, generally, see the anarchy to which they would carry us, and, in consequence, assume their proper station of champions for good order. Faction in this government will always seek reënforcements from State factions, and these will try, by planting their men here, to make this a State government. I could be personal, if I chose it, on this affair. There is some fear in the respect for government; and that fear will become hatred on some occasions, and contempt on others. The government is too far off to gain the affections of the people. What we want is not the change of forms. We have paper enough blotted with theories of government. The habits of thinking are to be reformed. Instead of feeling as a Nation, a State is our country. We look with indifference, often with hatred, fear, and aversion, to the other States.

If you have leisure, let me hear from you. Will anything be done for the college. I wish a portion, say ten per cent. on the sale of wild lands, was reserved for them. I consider our club as ordained and set apart once a-week for any good thing which tends to promote learning.

My respectful compliments to Mrs. Minot. Remember me to other friends

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 23, 1792.

My Dear Friend, — Mr. Sedgwick is returned in good spirits, after having talked a Dutch jury into a verdict, clear-

ing Hogeboom's murderers. . . . The evidence, I learn, was pretty strong; but *vox populi*, that is, the verdict of a jury, is — truth; *fiat justitia*.

I hear that the plan for the defence of the frontiers is likely to pass in the Senate. This I approve. To protect all is the duty of a government; and, under so many circumstances as furnish the frontier men a pretext to say the government is for the exclusive benefit of the middle and eastern States, it will soothe the terrified and angry spirits.

The Secretary of State is struck out of the bill for the future Presidency, in case of the two first offices becoming vacant. His friends seemed to think it important to hold him up as King of the Romans. The firmness of the Senate kept him out.

We have broached the militia bill, and I hope and believe shall pass one, doubtless a feeble, bad thing; but a beginning must be made, and improvements will follow.

Yesterday was the birthday. It was celebrated in a manner that must please the big man.

The post-office, I learn, often fails of the passage of newspapers. I inclose one. . . .

I believe the further assumption will prevail.

Your friend.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, March 8, 1792.

My Dear Friend, — Congress moves slowly, too slowly. The spirit of debate is a vice that grows by indulgence. It is a sort of captiousness that delights in nothing but contradiction. Add to this, we have near twenty *antis*, dragons watching the tree of liberty, and who consider every strong measure, and almost every ordinary one, as an attempt to rob the tree of its fair fruit. We hear, incessantly, from the old foes of the Constitution, "this is unconstitutional, and that is;" and indeed, what is not? I scarce know a point which has not produced this cry, not excepting a motion for

adjourning. If the Constitution is what they affect to think it, their former opposition to such a nonentity was improper. I wish they would administer it a little more in conformity to their first creed. The men who would hinder all that is done, and almost all that ought to be done, hang heavy on the debates. The fishery bill was unconstitutional; it is unconstitutional to receive plans of finance from the Secretary; to give bounties; to make the militia worth having; order is unconstitutional; credit is tenfold worse.

Do not despair as to your new office. I cannot doubt that it will do well. I thank you for your and Mrs. Minot's attentions to Miss W.

I am compelled to say, in this place, instead of putting off a sheet farther, as I could have wished, that I am truly, your friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, March 8, 1792.

My Dear Sir, —

. . . . . .

I have just resigned my place as a director of the bank, finding that my time in Congress occupies me too much, even to appear to discharge the former trust. I accepted it with reluctance at first, and then took occasion to declare my intention to resign, as soon as the branches should be formed.

Congress has been slow in motion, too slow. A multitude is capable of preventing action, but not of acting. The practice of crying out "this is unconstitutional," is a vice that has grown inveterate by indulgence, and those cry out most frequently who were opposed to its adoption. If they were more disposed to execute it according to their objections, the friends of union and order would have less cause to complain of delay, as well as of the hazard in which every good measure is kept hanging, as it were, with a rope round its neck, during its passage.

. . . . . .

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, April 19, 1792.

DEAR SIR,—

. . . . . .

The ways and means bill has passed the committee of the whole House, and is before the House. It makes an increase of the impost duty, which, in certain points of view, is disagreeable.

There is some burden on the merchant, and it seems to strain too much on one string. Smuggling is the natural consequence of excessive duties on imports, but the good habits of the officers and the importers, and the checks and guards of the law, I hope may be relied on, in a good measure, to prevent it.

The increase of duties on rival foreign manufactures cannot fail to raise our own. Iron is among the protected articles, and rated, I think, at ten per cent. The effect of the protecting duties will certainly be seen throughout the country, and in a few years our own fabrics will be carried on successfully. Opposition is made to the new duties being made permanent, and I have some fears that the act will be limited to a few years, say three.

. . . . . .

The sun begins to blister one almost. What a charming thing to pass the dogdays here. I am not at liberty to quit the field at this period of the session, but I am feverish with impatience.

Yours, sincerely.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, April 25, 1792.

DEAR FRIEND,—

. . . . . .

The assumption is in danger of being finally lost, and as

not a man of the *antis* will stir, and S . . . . is gone, and others of our side going, from the House, the difficulty is almost insuperable. Messrs. Strong and Langdon are gone from the Senate; still, however, I have considerable hopes of success, and no efforts will be spared to obtain it. We agree, and the Senate concur, to adjourn on the 5th May, which we shall not much exceed, to meet on the first Monday of November.

The Indians took leave of the President, and made speeches this day, and are going for home to-morrow. Joy go with them. They have been daily drunk.

The decision of the Judges, on the validity of our pension law, is generally censured as indiscreet and erroneous. At best, our business is up hill, and with the aid of our law courts the authority of Congress is barely adequate to keep the machine moving; but when they condemn the law as invalid, they embolden the States and their courts to make many claims of power, which otherwise they would not have thought of.

We shall amend the excise law, pass a poor law for the militia, and a bill to call them out to repel invasions, and to suppress insurrections and rebellions, and a few others of a like nature, before we rise. The bill respecting the public debt is yet before the House, and how many long speeches Messrs. Giles and Mercer have in them, is not to be known till the time of painful experience.

It is a long time since I had a letter. I will not complain, for that is a bad habit at best, and in a letter not to be indulged. I begin to fear, that, having long forborne, you now calculate on the rising of Congress, so as to miss your mark.

. . . . . .

Present me to friends, particularly to Mrs. D.

Your affectionate friend.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, May 3, 1792.

DEAR FRIEND, — We shall not finish business on Saturday, and therefore I take it for certain we shall not adjourn on that day; but the members have made up their mouths for home, and nothing will stop them many days longer. I fancy we shall adjourn without fail in the course of next week.

I am tired of the session. Attending Congress is very like going to school. Every day renews the round of yesterday; and if I stay a day or two after the adjournment, I shall be apt to go to Congress from habit, as some old horses are said to go to the meeting-house on Sunday without a rider, by force of their long habit of going on that day. The session will end more efficiently than I feared. A number of useful laws have passed; much remains unfinished, though in a state of preparation, which will facilitate the work at a future day. The assumption is yet unaccomplished, but not quite despaired of. If S . . . . . &c., had not skulked off and left us, I think we could carry it.

The wishes of the people and the policy of the government appear to me to coincide, in respect to hastening the extinction, or at least the progressive diminution, of the public debt. This important desideratum would have been sufficiently within reach, if this most unwelcome Indian war had not absorbed the means. While the government is reproached with it as a crime, every friend of it will see that it is a misfortune, which prudence cannot now avoid, and surely, even folly could not have chosen it, as a good thing *per se*. No measures will be neglected to finish it speedily; for the President, I am persuaded, is anxious to do so. But though the diminution of the debt may be retarded by this means, it will not be prevented. I am in no doubt of the Secretary's earnest desire to advance this work as fast as possible.

Causes, which I have in a former letter explained to you, have generated a regular, well-disciplined opposition party, whose leaders cry 'liberty,' but mean, as all party leaders

do, 'power,' who will write and talk and caress weak and vain men, till they displace their rivals. The poor Vice will be baited before the election. All the arts of intrigue will be practised — but more of this when we meet.

My usual desire to see Boston and so many esteemed friends as I have there, is increased by the talk of improvements — a new bridge and all the world in a bustle at the west end of the town — the town streets lighted, &c., &c.

Please to present my regards to our club friends.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, June 16, 1792.

DEAR FRIEND, — I cannot become a Benedict till the House is ready, and my landlord, Mr. Ivers, though a good man, is so little quickened by my impatience, that every thing is granted loathly, often retracted, and to be regranted by dint of importunity and persecution on my part, and then put in train of execution as soon as — he cannot help it. I have been kept on the trot incessantly, and finally, I hope to get the outside of my habitation painted, the two parlors brushed up, that is, new painted, the kitchen whitewashed or colored, the paper replaced on the rooms where it is loose, and the entry papered, and a woodhouse built. The house is pleasant.[1] You will perceive, by the preceding observations, that there are two parlors and a kitchen, two good chambers, and a small place over the entry for a small bed, a large and decent kitchen chamber, a pleasant and very good

[1] In a previous letter, he describes the house in these words: "It is on the hill next to Governor Bowdoin's. It will be painted and put in decent repair, and, as I think it sound philosophy to make the mind bend to the occasion, I already say it is well that I could not obtain another house, for this is commodious, at least decent, and, in point of prospect, &c., superior to most situations in the town."

The house has long since ceased to exist, and the very hill that it stood upon has been dug away.

upper chamber, and several upper apartments for a servant, a good cellar and two acres of ground, badly fenced, and Mr. Ivers is very loath to fence it at all. In this state of things, you will see I am not in a condition to indulge my wishes, by going to housekeeping within two or three weeks, if so soon, yet I shall have a man and maid in the house, and shall sleep there myself very soon.

Your friend, &c., in haste.

The house of the late Governor Hutchinson, near the old North Square, I hear, is to be had. But although that is the place for a public man to make influence, I cannot think of the north end.[1] The house is a noble one, however.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, October 4, 1792. — Thursday.

DEAR FRIEND, — I embrace the opportunity afforded by the return of Mr. J. Dwight's two pretty boys, to write you, not because I have any thing interesting to inform you of, but the missing a direct opportunity seems not unlike passing by you in the street without speaking, which is a thing I should not do.

The smallpox has desolated many families in this town. Charles Bulfinch has lost two children, and two others, brought by a favorite nurse from the country, are also dead. The doctors say, they lose next to none, but every night the silent mourners steal obscurely, without tolling of bells, to the grave. I have no doubt that the malignity of the disease exceeds any thing known in this town since the art of inoculating has been successfully practised. It is said one in fifty dies; in 1777 it was only one in about two hundred.

[1] The reasons why the north end was not to be thought of in 1792, were not precisely the same as would occur to the mind in 1854. It was then the most fashionable, and of course the most expensive, part of the town.

I suspect that much is yet to be learned in regard to the proper method of treatment; rather, *all*, for the improvement of skill consists in having unlearned certain murderous errors in heating the patient.[1]

To-morrow fortnight we begin our southern journey. Instead of locking up the house, we must quit it for good. Doctor Joy is going to sell it; price one thousand pounds. He has been civil enough; but as buying is out of the question for me, I am not sorry to save six months' dead rent till next spring. You, my friend, live in your own house, and no landlord can tell you to walk out of doors. Man is born to trouble, you see. This event is unexpected, and will oblige me to look out for a place of rest against my return.

France is madder than Bedlam, and will be ruined, if hostile force and friendly folly can effect it.

Electioneering goes on sleepily here. My name is omitted in the Monday and Thursday papers, but I expect to see it in those papers very soon with a vengeance.

I find Sedgwick is coming here. I wish to see him, but I sincerely regret that his lawsuit compels him.

Regards to friends, especially your *cara sposa*.

Yours, truly.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, November 12, 1792.

DEAR FRIEND, — Frances has been busy writing to Sophia, and will have informed her, as a matter of course, how she likes Philadelphia, her lodgings, &c. Our journey was uncommonly favorable as to the great points of good company, good weather, and good carriages. Our daily journey was easy, the houses better than those resorted to by the

[1] In a previous letter (September 16, 1792) he says, "This town is an hospital. The gowns which men, women, and children, black and white, have put on, look queerly, especially in the cold easterly weather. By way of precaution against the smallpox, they expose themselves to the cold, in a manner that would impair the health of the most robust.'

stage. The great business of visiting by cards is begun with spirit. Frances makes more progress in her department, than I am making in Congress. For we seem to move slowly, as we are used to do. The speech from the President will have reached you. It says, the dogs shall not bark against the excise — the House in reply say, amen. I think the excise will at last be gulped down the throats, even of the wild woodmen. Our politics present some interesting points. The excise will be a great revenue, if duly collected, and hasten the extinction of the debt very fast. The Indians are yet hostile. The tribes near the Wabash have made peace with General Putnam, (a good beginning,) and I hope the others will, after some time, listen to terms. The southern Indians are turbulent and threaten trouble. Spain is thought to interest herself improperly in their affairs. Her meddling would be a misfortune and make trouble. The sky is not clear in that quarter.

I expect to see parties as violent as ever. The debts of the States will not be received without a struggle. But, as it is said the accounts are nearly closed, I hope something may be done to the relief of our State; perhaps it might be carried to open a loan for such amounts as shall be found due to the States. This would answer our purpose in Massachusetts. Let me hear from you, your spouse, M., and other connections, to whom give my love. Yours, truly.

I am ignorant of the event of the elections. Notwithstanding, I have slept as well as can be expected in this situation. Let me hear from you.

The *antis* have joined to set up Clinton against John Adams. They seem to wish he may have the singular chance to mar two Constitutions.[1] I hope Vermont will not join that party. The men of the south are well trained for Clinton, says fame.

[1] The writer considered him as holding the office of Governor of New York, in violation of the Constitution of that State. At the election in April, 1792, John Jay received a clear majority of the votes, but by the simple expedient of putting into the fire the certified returns from three counties, the canvassers arrived at a way to declare Clinton elected. See Life of John Jay, by his son, (1833,) vol. i. chapter 8.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, November 19, 1792.

My Dear Friend, — The last post brought me no letters from Boston. I suppose my friends do not consider me as being yet in the harness. Congress seems not to begin the campaign with any spirit. The speech of the President is so federal that I should hope it would have some effect to repress the factious, levelling spirit which has plagued us heretofore. But it would be a weakness to suppose that we shall not find the opposition revived, as soon as any important measure shall stir the wrathful souls of our fault-finders. The poor Vice will be hard run. The Virginians have exerted all their force to combine the south, and discontented men in the middle States, and in New York, against him, and in favor of Clinton. I trust New England will rouse, and give Mr. Adams a firm and zealous support. Is it not strange that a man, unblemished in life, sincere in his politics, firm in giving and maintaining his opinions, and devoted to the Constitution, should be attacked, to place Mr. Clinton in the chair, who would have trusted the issue to arms, and prevented New York from adopting it, who has kept an *anti* party alive there by his influence, and holds his governorship by a breach of the State Constitution ?

From the account of the votes, published in the Centinel, I think I shall be turned to grass. I have been stall-fed here for a long time, and I have not any repugnance to trying my luck at the bar. This you know is the cant of all men who say the grapes are sour, when they cannot get at them. My partner joins with me in offering compliments to Mrs. Minot.

Dear friend, I am yours, truly.

For certain reasons I wish you would get from Russell the Centinel which has in it the piece on the moral influence of preaching, and send me by post. If not too troublesome, send with it a paper which contains a speculation, written to show that the New England States are not declining in their republicanism, as it has been pretended in a newspaper

in this city. The equal distribution of estates, their schools, and town corporations, are insisted on as proofs of their spirit of equality. Both the Centinels alluded to appeared about October, or the latter end of September.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 5, 1792.

DEAR FRIEND, — Sedgwick has, unfortunately, in a fit of spleen, actually written to Sam Fowler a virtual renunciation of his pretensions as a candidate in the next race for Congress. It is unworthy his fame, his sense, his duty, as an enlisted federal man, to shrink from the shadow of opposition. When his firmness was tried by its substance, it triumphed. Shall he lose, by want of temper, the ground he held by his fortitude? He must not be lost. He must be put forward at the head of the column in the next Congress, when the host of the south will come to trample down the labors of the two first Congresses. If Sam Fowler be his friend, and not incited to use the letter to his own views, will he not suppress it? I am sure Mr. S. would not, on reflection, write such another. I submit the matter to your reflections. It is very important that all the Massachusetts force should be kept good, and in case he should withdraw, it will make a twofold loss.[1]

The Commissioners for settling accounts of the United States with the individual States, inform us, by a letter, that they will be able to finish the business by July next, the term of their commission; that the State debts may be funded till March, which of course keeps the accounts open, and produces some delay. The attempt will be made to provide

[1] In a subsequent letter, after mentioning some domestic reasons that might require Mr. Sedgwick's retirement from Congress, he says: — "I lament, as a heavy public misfortune, the probable loss of his services at Congress. We are not strong enough to lose a single man, still less such an Ajax as Sedgwick. Our demoniacs would play France if they could."

that, as soon as the balances due to any States shall be known, loans shall be opened for the State notes to the amount. This provisional assumption of what may be found due to creditor States, will no doubt effect our purpose, or at least substantially, in Massachusetts. I suppose we are creditors of the United States, and I fear a more simple and direct assumption could not be carried.

The Indians at the south are said to be turbulent, and to threaten a general war. It has been said that they were pacified, but new appearances indicate very hostile dispositions. This would be horrible. There is no pretext even of complaint against the United States, as far as I have heard; probably the Indians are elated by the successes against St. Clair, and incited by Spanish arts, who evidently consider the Creeks as a barrier against the growing strength of the United States. The hostile Indians of the north-west are supposed to be rather more pacific than they were; but our Indian affairs, on the whole, are gloomy. Money spent in that way is worse than lost, and yet protection is not to be denied.

The Vice is here. He looks as if his election was undecided. The event is past conjecture. It would be a shame to oust him for that *anti*, Clinton.

. . . . . .

Farewell. Yours, truly.

My salutations to friends. Since writing the first page, I hear that the returns might be received till this day. Therefore it is very possible Sedgwick may be chosen.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 31, 1792.

My Dear Friend, — I thank you for your epistolary favors. I know you are extremely busy, and I declare by

these presents, that I release my claim for answers, except as you may conveniently find leisure.

. . . . . .

You reason very prudently on the conduct to be observed in regard to declining as a candidate. To refuse what is not in a very manifest train to be proposed, is not pleasant, and I have my fears that antifederal candidates will, by intrigue, exclude good men. It is important to have all the Massachusetts members true blue. W. Lyman is not of that description, and I hope no effort will be omitted to exclude him.

Frances is her own secretary. I find the length of the session is less obnoxious to my feelings than it was in my solitary bachelor state. I shall take it for certain that my mate will, from time to time, inform you of all that is worth your knowing. My scribbling will therefore be the shorter. Congress is very lazy; never more so. Two months only remain, and the sinking fund and assumption are yet to be acted upon. As we manage our time, I think we shall never get out of employment. The next session will be the pitched battle of parties. I am habitually a zealot in politics. It is, I fancy, constitutional, and so the cure desperate. I burn and freeze, am lethargic, raving, sanguine and despondent, as often as the wind shifts. On the whole, as men are governed more by feeling than reasoning, more by prejudice than even by their interests, I dare not confide in the stability of our politics. Time encourages hope, as every day adds the force of habit to federalism. Besides, the rising generation are all federal.

Accept the commission of representing me at Col. W's., as their and your faithful friend, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January, 1793.

DEAR FRIEND,—I read with concern your account of the divided state of the federal interest in your district.

Virginia moves in a solid column, and the discipline of the party is as severe as the Prussian. Deserters are not spared. Madison is become a desperate party leader, and I am not sure of his stopping at any ordinary point of extremity. We are fighting for the assumption of the balances, which shall be declared due the creditor States. He opposes, *vi et armis*. The spirit of the opposition, the nature and terms of the objections, all equally indicate a fixed purpose to prevent the payment of any thing called debts. If the balances were declared to-day, the objections against providing for them are ready broached. We hear it said, let us first see how we like what the commissioners decide; let us see whether it will be proper to ratify their doings; let the debtor States pay the creditor States, &c., &c. Should our assumption fail, should the provision for the balances fail in the next Congress, or should the commissioners cut off our just dues, so as to raise suspicions of jockeying, what a ferment there will be in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and South Carolina; and the rage of these States will be turned on the government, which has pledged its faith to pay them, not on the party that causes the breach. Thus by hostility they will gain allies, and make the well-affected disaffected.

I write in confidence, for part of my remarks are of a delicate nature. You will say, I croak and am hypped. Be it so. I shall be happy to find that the grounds of my apprehensions of trouble exist only in the fumes of my brain.

. . . . . .

Yours, truly.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 6, 1793.

My Dear Sir,—

. . . . . .

On Monday the Senate negatived our assumption bill, seventeen to eleven. . . . There is no hope of doing any thing for the State debts this session, nor will the fac-

tion from the south ever agree to provide for the balances. Thus we lose a valuable object now, and hereafter we may expect wars and rumors of wars. This will be a do-little session. What we fall short in work, we make up in talk.

. . . . . .

Yours, truly.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, February 20, 1793.

My Dear Sir, — The session of Congress has not been very efficient. The acknowledged object of the opposition is to prevent any important business being done. They pretend that the new House will be more equally representative. The negroes will then be represented; our oxen not. Quere, whether more equal then than now. However, I am far from being disposed to urge any objection to the negro computation of the Constitution. It may at least be used, *inter nos*, to repel the plea of existing inequality. The calls on the Secretary of the Treasury, the pretexts against the purchases of the public debt on terms to hold up the credit of the United States, (a declared object of the law,) the proceedings of the committee on the subject of St. Clair's failure, all the party do and all they say, and the manifestoes of their National Gazette,[1] indicate a spirit of faction, which must soon come to a crisis. I do not hesitate to declare my belief, that it is not intended by the leaders to stop at any temperate limit. They set out sour, suspicious, and with an ambition that places in the government might soothe. But, in the progress of things, they have, like toads, sucked poison from the earth. They thirst for vengeance. The Secretary of the Treasury is one whom they would immolate; Knox another. The President is not to be spared. His popularity is a fund of strength to that cause which they would destroy. He is therefore rudely and incessantly attacked. Every exertion is

[1] Freneau's Gazette, a paper usually considered as Mr. Jefferson's organ.

making, through their Gazette, to make the people as furious as they are themselves. My friends will say I am too ready to think ill of their views. I appeal from them to the Gazette, which they do not read in Boston, and I further appeal. . . . [The residue of this letter is unfortunately lost.]

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, August, 1793.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

The town is less frenchified than it was. Citizen Genet is out of credit; his rudeness is as indiscreet as it is extraordinary, and everybody is provoked with him. I like the horizon better than I did; there are less clouds. I do hope and trust we shall keep at peace. As to faction, we must expect to sleep, if we can, while the ship is rolling, for no calms, except those which are portentous of storms, are to be expected. We may be safe; we must not hope to be quiet.

. . . . . .

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, September 16, 1793.[1]

. . . . . .

I have just begun to display my taste as a gardener, and would wish to make Frances own that I am worthy to be your rival in that line. I cannot expect any other person will be partial enough to yield to such a bold pretension, and she would do it least of any one, if she did not meddle so

[1] He removed from Boston to Dedham in the spring or summer of 1793.

much in it as to take part of the praise, the greatest part. I have cut an alley through, which is partly bordered with trees, and shall be completely so. I intend to lay off the ground into regular beds, and, in a word, to make a very productive kitchen-garden, which shall contain all that is good to eat, and a small part of what is pretty to look upon. I begin to feel some spirit in the undertaking, though conscious of a want of taste and industry. Yet even the lazy will work for a hobby-horse. I begin to count the weeks which are left of the recess. I look forward with very unpleasant anticipations to that period, on political and domestic accounts.

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TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, December 6, 1793.

My Dear Friend, — I arrived here on the third day of the sitting of Congress, not without a portion of the hypo, on entering this city. I felt emotions not unlike those which a field of battle would inspire after the action. I expected to find the people in mourning, and almost in ruin, and I seemed to be at the threshold of a prison just closing upon me. The malignancy of the fever which showed its devastations, and that of politics which threatens them, raised up some bugbears. I soon found, however, that the greater part of this gloom proceeded from my own conjuration. The citizens seem to be busy and cheerful, and already the deep traces of the most formidable curse that ever visited any of our towns, are more than half worn out. It is not so much as allowed for an instant, that there can be any ground of apprehension of infection. Yet I am well assured a Mrs. . . . has died here of it within six days. It is nevertheless hardily denied that she is dead, or that she has been sick at all. It was a vile thing, however, to bury her, for in fact they have done it, dead or alive. One is said to have

shown signs of life, by the violent crowding his body into a small coffin. Another beat his coffin open. Both (says fame) are alive, and well. If danger has not absconded, fear has, such is the difference between looking upon danger approaching and retiring. I shall not neglect such precautions as prudence may point out, but I do not apprehend much hazard. I trust some to the non-susceptibility of a Yankee, and more to the disinfecting quality of the winter air. The history of the distemper is, and I fear will remain, very obscure. Many facts are lost; and faction among the doctors, and grief and terror among the citizens, have distorted those which are to be collected. So that if the fever should come again, I think the doctors would not starve it. It has been disputed whether it was imported or bred here; whether contagious or not; whether curable by tonics, or calomel and bleeding; whether the frost and rain put a stop to its ravages; in short, every thing that ought to be called fact, is disputed, and all that should be modestly confessed to be ignorance, is affirmed. For a long time the disease was local to Water street; afterwards round every sick person the infection spread in a circle. It is even said that some districts were not visited by it at all. Gould, the barber, is dead. It is said he took it by watching with the sick. Another is said to have stumbled in the dark over a coffin, which being burst, was put down and left to get a hammer. In a day or two he fell sick and died. Almost every person infected could, say they, trace the infection to a sick or dead person. Perhaps it was imported, but the susceptibility of the citizens might arise from the state of the air, and from the extreme agitation of the mind. The country was unsusceptible, except in a few instances, which are also contested, as every thing relating to the fever seems to be. Rush pronounced calomel and bleeding the cure-alls; provided he was called in season, he declared he cured ninety-nine out of an hundred. The proviso destroys the assertion. All vouch success. None had it. Like Sangrado's patients, they died for want of bleeding and warm water enough. I honor the zeal and heroism of the doctors, but heaven preserve me from being the subject of their noble exertions. I had rather trust nature. She would do better contending with one enemy than

with two. A Doctor Ross, who has lived in Turkey, (says fame,) treated it as the plague; his patients all died. He adopted Rush's mode; all died. Being alarmed and afflicted, he maturely formed a plan digested from the two others; all died. The frost came — the distemper disappeared. This I believe is the most true history. Not one, so far as I can learn, (except Colonel Hamilton) who had the decided malignant symptoms, survived. Colonel Hamilton was saved by Doctor Stevens's cold bath, and bark. The method being expensive, requiring many attendants, and condemned by the Rushites, was not put to any further test. The distemper was doubtless the most mortal ever known; not less deadly than animal poisons. Indeed antidotes are now found against them.

The spirit of the President will show you how affairs are. He sent us the correspondence with Genet, and a message rather tart. The House echo the speech. The new members look good-natured. Our horizon looks calm, but who can trust the weather. I hope for the best. Our State has, as Mr. B. Russell said, I know not on what authority, a balance of more than twelve hundred thousand dollars. The Congress House has been enlarged, commodiously I think.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 17, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — I cannot complete the imperfect information of my last, concerning Genet. Whether he is, or is not, recalled, is not known. His letter, denying that he has caused troops to be raised on our territory, and avowing that he has given out commissions to engage persons to fight for France, who are willing to expatriate themselves, is sent us by the President. It is a strange mixture of evasion and impudence; persons willing to fight for France become Frenchmen, and have a right to go armed, where they may

choose. It is really an avowal of the charge, under the cover of a flimsy excuse. His outrages, for which his masters doubtless gave him authority, ought to provoke indignation.

. . . . . .

There is no winter here, which is not friendly to health, say those who dread yellow fevers, nor to business in New England. Our regulation of commerce is yet in debate. It is all French that is spoken in support of the measure. I like the Yankee dialect better. Speak of me to your good mother.

Yours, truly.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, January 28, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — The debate on the war regulations (for so they ought to be named) is yet open.[1] Never was a completer defeat than the restricting party have met with, as far as argument goes. But party has resources after those of reasoning are exhausted. The ground is avowedly changed. Madison & Co. now avow that the political wrongs are *the* wrongs to be cured by commercial restrictions, which, in plain English is, we set out with a tale of restrictions and injuries on our commerce, that has been refuted solidly; pressed for a pretext, we avow that we will make war, not for our commerce, but with it; not to make our commerce better, but to make it nothing, in order to reach the tender sides of our enemy, which are not to be wounded in any other way. You and I have long believed this to be the real motive; I own I did not expect to hear it confessed. It was, I still think, ill-judged to do it; but the case was urgent, and silence shameful. Our trading folks should be undeceived, if facts, which speak for themselves, and which have at last made faction itself speak truth, can restore them the use of their faculties. All Massachusetts will vote against the re-

[1] Mr. Madison's resolutions, introduced January 3, 1794. See introduction to "speech on Mr. Madison's resolutions."

solutions, (at least so we are persuaded); probably all New England, Smith, of Vermont, excepted; but the south is well disciplined. Lee, of Virginia, made a very catholic speech against his colleagues. The event of the first vote is rather doubtful, yet we think the chance in our favor. I have, however, no idea that this folly will pass into a law. It answers the usual wish of the faction to prevent doing any good.

You mention your opinion that Dearborn is fond of attentions, and inflated with his own importance. I know little of the man, but I had a prepossession in his favor. I have supposed that he came here, as new members sometimes do, persuaded that the old ones go too far, and that a middle course is more eligible; however this may be, I have no great fears of any eventual misapplication of the force of Massachusetts. It is, with Connecticut, the lifeguard of the Constitution. If this is vanity, excuse it. I mean no compliment to myself further than being federal is one. I have been delivered, safely, of a speech, which I am glad to have off my hands. It contained answers to several of your inquiries, heretofore suggested in your letters. Dexter made a speech much better than mine, which has fixed his reputation in the House very properly; he will be a good fellow, and prop the cause of good government like a little Atlas.

There has lately been a call from the Senate on the President, to lay before them the correspondence between Gouverneur Morris and the French Republic. This, if published, might disclose our minister's sentiments, and perhaps expose his head. Whether the President will send the correspondence or not, is yet to be seen; I hope not, for these fellows claim a share in diplomatic business, which is intended to unpresident the chief magistrate. The spirit of mischief is as active as the element of fire, and as destructive. I continue to hear good intelligence from Springfield. Speak of me to Mrs. Gore.

Yours, &c.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, February 25, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — I miss you, because I wish to sit down and croak with a friend. I have more fears of war than I had when you left us. The newspapers indicate a storm. The seizure of our vessels, carrying French West India produce, is said to be going on, under the pretext of some old edict. If this should be pushed by the English, it is driving us to the wall. There is no appearance of an intention to give up the posts; and the pressing of that point was, I think, both unwise and ill-timed on our part. These circumstances, which ought to double our caution, will probably inflame our rashness. What ought to be a dissuasive, will, I fear, prove an incentive. The resolutions will, no doubt, be reinvigorated by the show of Boston support. I think they will not be carried; but the irritation against England has gained upon the sentiment of the House, and, to speak truth, the causes for it are more manifest. John Bull, proud of his strength, angry with our partiality to France, ardent in his contest, and straining every sinew, shows less patience and respect for us than he ought to do. He shows no spirit of condescension in respect to the posts, and in the line of navigation and trade, the principle of the seizures, before mentioned, shows a spirit of rivalry that is provoking enough. We have not, however, any authentic notice of the adoption of such a principle.

On the whole, I do not believe that Great Britain intends to force us into a war; but she intends to make our neutrality unpleasant to our feelings and unprofitable to our navigation, &c.; and in doing this, she probably cares little whether it is war or peace. Our gallicism hurts her pride, and she is heated enough to punish all the friends of her foes. You will not think so meanly of me as to suppose that I am gloomy on account of your town-meeting. I feel no loathness to engage in measures that will draw more resentment upon my head, if by doing so I can add any new security to our peace. I found my apprehensions on some facts respecting

their stubbornness on the affair of the posts, and also on premises of a still more decisive kind, before alluded to, which God grant may prove untrue. Learned Trumbull and others have been croaking with me, which is some consolation. However the crisis of our politics may issue, the line of duty is plain. Peace, peace, to the last day that it can be maintained; and war, when it must come, should be thrown upon our faction, as their act and deed. In the mean time, good men should be alert; they should see the urgency of circumstances, and be ready to impress caution upon the rash and factious, and to rouse the activity of the sleepy patriots. The resolutions can only aggravate the danger, and diminish our preparation against it. Our policy should be precisely the reverse; to dispel the danger, if possible, and at the same moment to prepare the means of defence against it. To arm, to fortify, to train militia corps, and above all, to furnish pecuniary resources now in peace; to do as much of this, and to continue it as long as possible, and let foreign nations waste their strength and their fury. Thus we might hope, by delay, to gain as they lose strength; besides which, we should take the chance of events, which may, and I flatter myself will, after all, save us from the destructive evil that threatens our nation.

What I have written is strictly of a confidential nature. It may also appear, at a future day, to be a symptom of the dumps. Be that as it may, I write under the impressions of the moment, which others feel as strongly as I express them. I beg you would let Craigie see the inclosed, in confidence. Our friends Eustis and J. C. Jones ought to know, in like manner, that they are keepers of the peace. I see no objection to their knowing the contents.[1]

Yours, as ever.

[1] Our relations with Great Britain had become extremely critical. The military frontier posts, within the jurisdiction of the United States, which were to have been given up by the terms of the treaty of peace, continued to be occupied by British garrisons. No compensation had been made for the negroes carried away at the close of the war. In addition to these old causes of irritation, the fury of the great contest in Europe caused our rights as neutrals to be brought into constant question, and American vessels and property were continually captured by British cruisers, and condemned, under certain recent orders in Council, of a most unreasonable and exceptionable character. The never-failing question of the right of impressment was also

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, March 5, 1794.

My Dear Friend,—

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It is needless to remark how acceptable and how well-timed the second Boston town-meeting was. The languid resolutions[1] receive a death wound in consequence. They were postponed by the party for one week. The war party will be kept in check for a time. We have no further news from Kentucky. I fancy we should be able to carry a vote disavowing them, and for suppressing their banditti by force, which I trust would prevent a war with Spain.[2] Gallatin is turned out of the Senate.[3] I heard King make there one of the most admirable speeches that ever was pronounced. It was both solid and rhetorical. John Langdon would probably serve the people as Vice-President. The hope of that may gain the party a vote for the time. Of all petulant, imprudent men, the English minister[4] is the most so. I believe he has sense and good principles; but he rails against the conduct of our government, not *ore rotundo*, but with a gabble that his feelings render doubly unintelligible. Mr. Pinkney is evidently sour, and also gallican. Here the man is void of moderation and prudence. The cross-fire of their accounts is enough to raise a quarrel. Our man has the most coolness, undoubtedly. But it is lamentable that the true history of events should be given

fruitful of difficulties, and our vessels were searched and men taken from them as British subjects, with all the insolence which is apt to accompany superiority of physical force. In short, Great Britain was "driving us to the wall," in a manner which, if not speedily redressed, would have compelled us to resort to the sword.

[1] Mr. Madison's resolutions, offered in the House January 3, 1794.

[2] The western country was in a state of excitement on account of the refusal by Spain of the free navigation of the Mississippi. Among the machinations imputed to "Citizen" Genet, was a project for a military expedition from Kentucky against New Orleans.

[3] His seat was contested and declared vacant, on the ground that he had not been, for nine years previous to his election, a citizen of the United States.

[4] Mr. Hammond.

by men under such prejudices. Messrs. J. Coles and T. Dickinson would do well to state some sound and wholesome truths through some channel that would reach Mr. Pitt. Had such a man as Lord Dorchester been sent here, their foolish insolence, and our no less foolish prejudices, would not have had existence at this day; the true interests of both would be now understood and pursued. Neither is just or cool enough at present to do it. — On looking over the page, I see that I use too strong expressions respecting Mr. Pinkney; he is a sober, calm man, and will not irritate; but he has prejudices, and unless a man has a mind above them, he can do little service there.

It is reported that William Smith and your humble servant have been burned in effigy in Charleston, South Carolina. The fire, you know, is pleasant, when it is not too near; and I am willing to have it believed, that, as I come out of the fire undiminished in weight, I am now all gold. I laugh, as you will suppose, at the silly rage of the burners.

. . . . .

We have this moment adopted a resolution to lay a general embargo, by a great majority.[1] Whether this will be agreed to by the Senate, is more than I can guess. Should objection be made there, I think it will be to its being general. My own impressions are, that the supposed remedy should go no farther than the present state of the evil, namely, to the West India trade.

The language of the House is rather intemperate. We call the British *our* enemies. I would *do* what is firm, and *say* what is not harsh. Harsh phrases, used here, can only obstruct our demand for justice.

Our materials for war are but poor; speech-making public bodies are no warriors.

[1] A joint resolution was passed (March 26) laying an embargo for thirty days; — afterwards extended for thirty days longer.

About a month after, and after Mr. Jay's appointment as special minister to Great Britain, a bill for the suspension of all intercourse with that nation passed the House, but failed in the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice-President. By that good deed, Mr. Adams brought upon himself much obloquy; but there was ample indemnity in the conviction that he thereby prevented the failure of Mr. Jay's negotiation, and saved us from a war, at least until 1812.

It is to be decided to-day whether the Senate will agree to our embargo. Much may be said against it; yet it is left to chance to decide its usefulness. Our vote was so general, that I think the Senate will agree to an embargo on the West India trade, at least, which I thought would be going far enough. Yours.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, March 26, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — I take more and more pride in the comparison of our merchants and people with those of the south. You praise the former, very justly, for their coolness and steadiness. It is a time when the indulgence of passion is peculiarly pleasant, and no less costly; for it will perhaps cost our peace, our wealth, and our safety. It is our intemperate passion that aggravates our embarrassments. Some persons think it had no little influence to produce them. I would not justify the insolence and injustice of the English: they are not to be justified; but our fury for the French, and against the English, is more natural than salutary. France has stopped more than an hundred sail of our vessels at Bordeaux. We sit still; we say nothing; we affect to depend on their justice; we make excuses. England stops our vessels with a provoking insolence; we are in a rage. This marked discrimination is not merited by the French. They may rob us; they may, as it is probable they will, cut off Tom Paine's head, vote out the Trinity, kill their priests, rob the merchants, and burn their Bibles; — we stand ready to approve all they do, and to approve more than they can do. This French mania is the bane of our politics, the mortal poison that makes our peace so sickly. It is incurable by any other remedy than time. I wish we may be able to bear the malady till the remedy shall overcome it. The English are absolutely madmen. Order in this country is endangered by their

hostility, no less than by the French friendship. They act, on almost every point, against their interests and their real wishes. I hope and believe such extreme absurdity of conduct will be exposed with success. Should a special minister be sent from this country to demand reparation, much will depend on his character and address. Who but Hamilton would perfectly satisfy all our wishes? This idea, a very crude and unwarranted one to suggest, should be locked up in your bosom. I know not that such a thing will happen; I incline to wish it may. He is *ipse agmen*. Should it be carried into effect, the English merchants ought to rouse their London friends, and to exert their pen and ink powers, to explain the true situation of things in this country. In a word, I think you ought to help the two gentlemen mentioned in your letter to state the political mischiefs worked here by the *Jacobin* system the English pursue; that they Frenchify us; they do every thing they should not do; that they ought to raise their policy from the ground, where it now grovels, to the height from whence the statesman can see clearly and very far. I am full of a book on this subject. I wish I could make John Bull read it; such ideas, fully dilated, repeated, pressed, and diffused, would aid the extra messenger, and would help the cause of peace.

If John Bull is a blockhead, and puts himself on his pride to maintain what he has done, and should refuse reparation, it will, I think, be war.

In that case, I dread anarchy more than great guns. To guard against it, let us be careful how we form our plan of warfare. I consider two dangers as peculiarly attached to a state of war: the stoppage, disturbance, and diversion of industry from the productive to the destructive course; and the acrimony and delirium of popular passions by the efforts and disasters of the operations of war. Therefore, forbear all land expeditions, invasions of Canada, &c. Keep a force to repel and baffle invasions; thus the most possible will be produced, the least possible expended. Strain the revenue as much as prudence will warrant; support credit, and do every thing by the National Government, nothing by the States; and let individuals privateer. The

whole energy of the war will be drawn off into the cold water; and while it acts there with the more effect, for not having our force occupied in any other way, it will not generate much fury at home. Thus it is, I hope, possible we may avoid anarchy, and prevent the extreme impoverishment of the country.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, May 2, 1794.

My Dear Sir, — It seems to be well known to the public, that Sedgwick has affronted me, and that I have a proper sense of it. Conformably, therefore, to the expectation of my constituents — a rule for my whole conduct — I have challenged him, and the fellow will not fight me. What can I do, therefore? I am glad he will not.

To be serious, it is a strange fancy people have, to cut me out fighting work. Sedgwick's dispute, if it existed, was that which he so much enjoyed giving an account of at Breck's.

Yesterday, we had a squabble about a tax on the transfers of funded stock, and it was carried. Dexter took a wrong course. This distresses Hamilton exceedingly, and well it may; for, to begin to tax the public debt, when we are afraid to tax snuff, is a bad omen. I think the tax proposed is five cents on a hundred dollars transferred. I used my endeavors to show that a free transfer was a part of the terms; that a tax on the transfer was virtually levied on the possession, by diminishing the value, which is no more than the article will net on the sale; that a right, claimed and exercised, to draw back *ad libitum*, annihilates the debt, which exists in confidence; that the moral person who contracted will never become the legislator over the contract; and that, by doing so, instead of contributing a part for a common protection, the creditor loses all his property — the exaction of a part being annihilation to the residue. All which are familiar arguments to you.

But I took occasion to notice the falsity of the pamphlets,

newspapers, and speeches, which say that paper influence moves Congress; for that, in truth, the Massachusetts members do not draw income enough merely from funded stock to buy the oats for the southern members' coach-horses. I had taken occasion to say that no one of the Massachusetts men keeps a coach, or is able to do it.

If any thing can justify this exculpatory speech, which, however, did not say a word about myself separately, it is the public utility of it, to arrest the activity of calumny against the government.

To notice these scoundrel handbills, &c., is humbling. To say nothing, when facts are so much on one's side, is more proud than wise.

The combat against excises on tobacco turned favorably. Madison spouted against excise, and in favor of land tax, hoping to prevent any thing, or to get only that voted which would raise enemies to the government. Taylor, of Virginia, says to King — "You are strange fellows: Formerly, you did what you chose with a small majority; now, we have a great majority, and can do nothing. You have baffled every one of our plans."

I wish he may prove a prophet. The resistance to wild projects has risen in its spirit and style, as hope declined. We have banged them as hard as we could, and they have been tamer than formerly.

Taylor said, also, that, though a minority, we had carried and were carrying all our measures, frigates, taxes, negotiation, &c.

We shall, I hope and earnestly pray, adjourn in three weeks. A bill prohibiting the sale of French prizes, passed by the Senate, lies before us. The irritation against England is yet strong, which keeps it back. Should it not pass, it will afford some pretext to urge against Mr. Jay in England. The embargo will not be continued again. So say most persons. I always thought it a measure of weakness; but of the many proposed, it was the least to be disapproved. Nothing would have been better still.

Yours, &c.

Dexter is a jewel of a fellow. He holds a bold language, and awes the Smileys and Gileses.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, May 6, 1794.

DEAR FRIEND, — I should suffer a fever of the hypo, as severe as the fever and ague, if I could persuade myself Congress would sit here till midsummer. But I think we shall adjourn in three weeks. The heat, weariness, a desire to disperse our mischief-makers, conspire to wind up the session.

It has been unusually painful and hazardous to peace and good order. My hopes are, however, that we shall escape the threatened danger, which will coincide with the interests and wishes of the people, and the sense of a majority of Congress. Such are the wishes of a majority of Congress, although a number have been duped into a support of measures tending to a war. The desperadoes desire war; and I think they would get the upper hand to manage a war. Whatever kindles popular passions into fury, gives strength to that faction. What fine topics for calumny would not a war furnish? A moderate or honest man could be stigmatized, mobbed, declared a suspected person, guillotined, and his property might be taken for public purposes. France might see her bloody exploits rivalled by her pupil, emulous of her glory.

War, without anarchy, is bad enough; but would it not also bring the extreme of confusion?

Federal men come from the northward to Congress with an opinion that government is as strong as thunder, and that by coaxing and going half way with certain southern members, they might be won. Both these opinions yield very soon to the evidence of their senses. They see government a puny thing, held up by great exertions and greater good luck, and assailed by a faction, who feel an inextinguishable animosity against any debt-compelling government, and whose importance sinks as that of equal laws rises.

Yesterday, the senators from Virginia moved for leave to bring in a bill to suspend that part of the treaty with Great

Britain which relates to debts. Thus, murder, at last, is out. Norfolk and Baltimore perform heroic exploits in the tar and feathers line. Here, they only dismantled, by force, a schooner, which five British officers, prisoners on parole, had got leave to go to England in, having chartered her. These are violences worthy of Mohawks. Compared with New England, the multitude in these towns are but half civilized.

Will our Yankees like a war the better for being mobbed into it, and because, also, the south will not pay the British debts? Our people have paid; and will they pay, in the form of war, for their southern brethren? I do not know that passion is ever to be reasoned down; but other passions could be reasoned up to resist the prevailing one. I wish our newspapers were better filled with paragraphs and essays to unmask our Catilines.

A land tax is likely to be rejected, and the dislike to it will carry along indirect taxes. While war is an event to be provided against, the increase of revenue, by excise, is an important object.

. . . . . is as he was made. His foes will say, by way of reproach, and his friends, by way of vindication, he was born so.

I am sorry for the failure of the dam, and am in hopes you will profit by the event to make it the stronger. Success to you.

Speak of me to friends as may suit the sentiments with which I am theirs and yours.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, July, 3, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — The events which have occurred since we left Springfield have not deserved a place in the history of the Nation or the State. They are, nevertheless, worth relating to those whose kind concern for the actors

confers importance upon trivial occurrences. After this formal *proœmium*, I proceed with my work, without invoking any muse. Frances sits by me, so much elated with the arrival of the long-expected new chaise, that a spark of her spirits will be inspiration sufficient. It was almost a shame to travel so fast as we did. Having taken a hack, to suit the delicacy of our travellers, we did not blush to reach Dedham on Saturday morning, unhurt by the violent shower which overtook us on Thursday. . . The coolness of the weather, and the perfect convenience of our vehicle, diminished the fatigue, and we are all very well. On arriving, we consulted Dr. A. for John's cough; but before it was convenient to administer medicine, he got well. This would happen to most patients, probably, if they would give nature fair play. Since his cold abated, the boy has been very wonderful. His improvement in the imitative arts is so great, that he shakes his head as his mother does. I hope this is not an ominous forwardness. . .

The politics of Dedham are interesting. Be it known, to our friends at a distance, that the squash town is the capital of Norfolk. A court-house is ordered, by the worshipful sessions, (by a vote passed on Tuesday,) to be erected near my territory, according to a plan which Mr. Bulfinch is to be requested to draw. A jail is also to be built, which is a comfort to us. I do not perceive that our folks are much elated with their new dignity, so that if our squash vines should in future bear pineapples, they will be surprised. The Supreme Court is to sit here in August, and then we shall have lessons and examples of good manners. I deal much in little things; and I confess I prefer them to the wrangling scenes of Congress, where meaner passions are often excited by meaner objects, and strut with a mock dignity that would be farce, if it did not menace us with tragedy. I do not read the Chronicle. Abuse is unread, and I hope unregarded. I am willing to keep politics out of my head, lest they should craze me. It requires little more than self-command to prefer domestic happiness to the furious contests of party, where a man has only to choose between the reproaches of his own mind and those of bankrupts and knaves. If I were still a single man, I might dread

more than I actually do the sentence of the public, *stay at home.*

I shall go to-morrow to hear the oration, and to see the bustle of the Boston frolic. George Bliss will give you as good a preachment as any of the orators of the day. The season is a hopeful one. We have had fine showers.

. . . . . .

Yours affectionately.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

July 24, 1794.

. . . . . .

I am beginning to feel in earnest in building, and have lost all feeling to the Chronicle whip, till I see they have, in Monday's, alluded to Colonel W., the Hampshire tory of 1775. Rascals, let him alone, and give me double beatings. His age, truly venerable by virtue and wisdom, ought not to be disturbed, because I stand in the way of others. I wish he may not notice the paragraph, for, stupid as it is, it might give him some pain. . . .

I know nothing of the state of parties further than that the bad are busy, and the good are, as usual, timid and indolent. Calumny is despised, and yet it has an effect. The Chronicle is a noted liar, and yet scandal is a treat to many who despise the vehicle. . . . Yours, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

August 8. — Friday morning.

DEAR FRIEND, —

. . . . . .

The democratic club[1] met lately in Faneuil Hall. This is

[1] Among the forgotten follies of a past age, the attempt, in this country, to imitate the worst of all conceivable models, the Jacobin Club of Paris, was

bold, and every thing really shows the fixed purpose of their leaders to go desperate lengths. It is a pleasant thing for the yeomanry to see their own government taken out of their hands, and themselves cipherized by a rabble formed into a club. Thus, Boston may play Paris, and rule the State.

I live out of the vortex of politics, and keep my mind more unengaged than I expected I could. I bud my trees with zeal; and as long as the Chronicle lets my plums and pears alone, I will not attempt to rescue my character. All *that* can injure, is not worth saving.

. . . . . .

Yours, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, September 8, 1794.

DEAR FRIEND, — I am, with Frances and the child, S., and Miss H., at Mrs. Phillips's; — she is the mother of the Springfield tribe. F. and I and John have been to see Mr. Gore's palace, at Waltham. I do not expect to build a smarter one myself. But it will give you as warm a reception as any house can. I shall have a hall, and no entry through the house. To name it Springfield Hall is one step towards warming the house, and making it seem home-ish, before we get into it. If I cannot see my friends there, I would not wish to live there myself. F. goes in winter, as the swallows do, to a more genial climate, to wait till spring thaws the old nest. I have a wife and family during summer; but, as the birds do, I return in spring, and choose the same mate, and build again in the same nest. Do you lengthen your own family catalogue, as you do mine? I have not thought of counting my children by the dozen;

one of the most remarkable. Some details of the theatrical extravagances of the American imitations are given in the "Life of John Jay," (by his son William Jay, New York, 1833.) Nothing but their mischievous and dangerous character saved them from measureless contempt.

but I shall arrange my house to hold as large a family as I may be blessed with. Yet you will observe that houses of the smallest size are usually twice as full of children as palaces. Our little boy requires more than one attendant, although he is the quietest soul in the world. How half a dozen little ones are kept out of the fire and water at the same time, I cannot see. I am at last more at ease in respect to the choice of the plan for my house than I expected to be. It will be larger than my first views, yet for plainness and even cheapness, it will not go far beyond them. . . .

I am concerned to hear of the sickness at New Haven. I hope it is not infectious, (I should say contagious.) If I should hear that character of the disease, I should have fears for Springfield.

The club is despised here by men of right heads. But it is not safe to make light of your enemy. They poison every spring; they whisper lies to every gale; they are everywhere, always acting like Old Nick and his imps. Such foes are to be feared as well as despised. They wait in silence for occasions, and when they occur, out they come and carry their points. They will be as busy as Macbeth's witches at the election, and all agree the event is very doubtful. On personal accounts, I cannot be called to hazard less; — perhaps by falling, to gain more; for, besides peace and quietness, I should, by being *out*, pass for one who is persecuted for doing my duty. If I should be rechosen, the same eagerness to criminate me, and much less to counteract it, might leave me on worse ground. The late crisis affords the best point of time to be off. Yet you are all well aware that a man cannot quit the party that will not quit him, without bringing reproach on his spirit and on his principles. By getting out, he becomes again a free agent. The Pittsburg rebellion cannot, I think, end badly for government, unless government flinches from its duty. It hastens faction to act, before it is ready for more than intrigue and plotting. Your papers should be kept right.

. . . . . .

Yours, ever.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, September 11, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — The expedient of a journey to Dedham, for the benefit of M.'s health, appears to me judicious. The charming air of September, so cooled and purified by showers as it has been of late, is a cure-all. We have no yellow fevers at Dedham. Laziness is my disease, and it has been too long neglected, I fear, to be cured. I have a string of affairs to *talk* about, with an exemplary diligence; not one, however, is in train of execution. To dig a cellar, prepare materials for building, and to adjust contracts, are jobs for which I am as ill qualified by inexperience as indolence. Yet they will overwhelm me if neglected, and my time is soon to be claimed for public duty. What immense sacrifices a patriot has to make! and what a bustle the candidates make for the chance!

Of late, the Chronicle seems to droop, and the party is said to be crestfallen on account of Mr. Jay's good reception. The chance of peace is even now such, that it would have been rashness to have lost it by war measures. Yet the chance, though promising, may turn against us. In that case, the event will, as usual, govern opinions; and the wise world will rail against the men of peace. Europe exhibits a scene of confusion and misery, which is contrasted more strongly by the state of America than that of any other part of the world. Yet though we are bystanders, and ought to be impartial, the passions of probably a majority have taken sides. Should the war last another year, I have the most serious apprehensions that the excessive partiality of our citizens for one of the fighting parties, will be played upon to dupe the nation into the whirlpool. How can the war last another season? how can it end? I can answer neither of these queries.

I wish to see you, to commune with you concerning politics and building — your canal, and my fruit trees. The latter are *pro tempore* my hobby-horse. My knife, for inoculating, is daily in my hands. I hope, at some future day,

to enjoy the pleasure of giving my Springfield friends a variety of the best fruit. The prospect is not, I trust, a very remote one, as many of my trees are thrifty. Simple pleasures of this class are so long in progress, that I consider it proper to cultivate a taste which may not wear out faster than I do. I own, however, that I go on with too much ardor to expect to hold my wind to the end of the race.

Our city[1] is soon to be adorned with a jail and court-house, provided a committee of the sessions can be persuaded to hasten their snail's gallop. I think I have mentioned, in a former letter, that the honorable Supreme Court was to sit here in August. They did sit, and in tolerable good humor. Two days and a piece finished the business. The jurors could not but feel relief from the former burden of attending fifteen, sometimes thirty, days in Boston. I argued one cause, and thought I could be well satisfied to wear my law coat again, especially if the pockets should be properly lined; and it will not be the fault of the democratic club, if I do not cast off my political coat. Such strong ground may be taken against those clubs, that it ought not to be delayed. They were born in sin, the impure offspring of Genet. They are the few against the many; the sons of darkness (for their meetings are secret) against those of the light; and above all, it is a *town* cabal, attempting to rule the *country*. Some Hampshire ink should be shed against them. They are rather waning here. Yet their extinction is more to be wished than expected; and if they exist at all, it will be like a root of an extracted cancer, which will soon eat again and destroy. Any taint of that poison, left behind, will reinfect the seemingly cured body; therefore the knife should now be used to cut off the tubercles. I hate this metaphor, as I am unskilled in surgery. Plainly, then, I think it necessary they should be so written down, and utterly discredited, that they shall have less than *no* influence — by making influence against their disgraceful cabal. Soon the pilgrims travelling towards Mecca, for their election, will have to proceed on pease, boiled or unboiled, as

[1] Dedham.

fortune may direct. The democratic clubs will not neglect to support the only two faithful of the Massachusetts members.

Our little John is the best boy in the world, says the critical review of his mother, which proves that the best are noisy things. . . . . .

Your affectionate brother.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, November 12, 1794.

DEAR FRIEND, — Report says that despatches are received from Mr. Jay, containing the best information respecting the progress of his mission; that although nothing is definitively settled, nothing meets with obstruction. The Secretary of State tells me that the British Government proceed fairly, candidly, and without affected delays. Young Bob Morris is arrived yesterday, and says a passenger (from London) is very confident despatches were actually sent to Lord Dorchester to give up the posts. This is not to be expected, in the progress of the business. I believe, however, that the prospect of peace brightens. Bob Morris left London the latter end of September. I write in haste, as the mail is near closing. The support of the wise and worthy, in my district, does me great honor, although I well know their support is given from higher motives than private or personal considerations. No quorum yet in the Senate. Yours, truly.

Regards to friends in the club.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, November 18, 1794.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

Sedgwick is come; and we have hopes of having anti-federalism weeded quite out of the Massachusetts corps, as the prospect of excluding Lyman and Dearborn is much relied on, as well as of the election of good men in the other districts. We know little of the state of facts at present, further than my district. Lyman looks woebegone.

Dallas has returned from the army, sounding the praises of the Secretary. Strange! But what is stranger, he has penned a paragraph in Brown's Gazette, of the same tenor. So say the conjurors. Is it to win character, by joining a prosperous cause, now that the Genet and anarchy side is weak and disgraceful? He is said to have fallen out with the Governor, whose daily libations have drowned his discretion, and let him down in the opinion of the army. It proves D.'s principles, and the preponderance of the good cause.

To-morrow the speech is to be delivered in our House, as the Senate chamber is thought to be dangerous for the crowd to overload. Mr. Burr arrived, and made a quorum this day. Faction seems to languish. The storm was dreadful formerly; now the calm is stupid. I hear of no bad schemes; but there is no trust in appearances.

You men of Boston deserve a good government, for you show you will support it. Here the supine good men let Swanwick[1] get a nominal majority, which will be contested. Never was more open influence, nor more corrupt, as his opposers say.

It would gratify the well disposed in Boston to learn how generally and anxiously their exertions were regarded from hence, and from every other quarter. The great man certainly was not indifferent — not because my *personal* weight was much, but the party battle was to prove that *he* had or

[1] Of Philadelphia.

had not the support of that part, and, by its influence, of the other parts of the eastern States. His own system of negotiation was in trial.

I lately saw Toby Lear, who is not cured of attachment to some errors. L. Lincoln is said to be wrong, also, in some leading principles — a good and able man. It would be unfortunate he should go wrong, if chosen.

The federal prospect is thought, by our friends, to be brightening daily; peace is more and more to be relied on.

Yours, truly.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, November 29, 1794.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

I have not, at this sitting, leisure to write fully on the very interesting and singular debates of the week.[1] Fenno and the inclosed will give you the public history of the affair. The private history deserves to be known; that the faction in the House fomented the discontents without; that the clubs are everywhere the echoes of the faction in Congress; that the Speaker[2] is a member of the democratic club, and gave the casting vote on adding certain words which spoiled the clause, being a member of the club. He voted, therefore, for his own exculpation. Madison and

[1] In the President's address to Congress, at the opening of the session, the leading topic was the then recent insurrection in Pennsylvania, usually known as the "whiskey rebellion." The manner in which he spoke of the democratic clubs led to a stormy debate in the House. Mr. Jefferson, in a letter to Madison, spoke of the President's denunciation of the clubs as an extraordinary act of boldness, an attack on the freedom of discussion, an inexcusable aggression.

[2] The Speaker was Mr. Muhlenburg, of Pennsylvania. In the debate in committee of the whole, upon the answer of the House to the President's address, the answer was amended by striking out the reference to the "self-created societies." In the House, the part struck out was restored. A motion was then made to add a clause restricting what was said of "self-created societies" to such as existed in "the four western counties of Pennsylvania, and parts adjacent." This motion was carried by the casting vote of the Speaker.

Parker are honorary members. Oh shame! where is thy sting!

Yours, affectionately.

P. S. Would the insertion of the debates into your country papers have any good effect? W. Lyman did as usual. Every thing that will impress public opinion, as far as truth and decency allow, ought now to be urged, as the issue rests with the public, to hold up the clubs or the magistracy.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 12, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — I think public life has not chilled my social attachments; nor do I see much in it calculated to draw me off from them.

The last session, the noise of debate was more deafening than a mill; and this, excepting in one instance, maintains a pouting silence, an armed neutrality, that does not afford the animation of a conflict, nor the security of peace. We sleep upon our arms. To *sink* the public debt, by paying it, seems to be the chief business to expedite. That will require some address to get effected, as our anti-funders are used to a more literal *sinking* of debts. To put the debt in train of being paid off, would, in a measure, disarm faction of a weapon.

Events have shown the falsehood of almost every anti-federal doctrine; and the time favors the impression of truth. It is made, and the government stands on better ground than it ever did. But I wish exceedingly that our sober citizens should weigh matters well. Faction is only baffled, not repenting, not changed. New grounds will be found or invented for stirring up sedition; and unless the country is now deeply sensible of the late danger, and of the true characters of our public men, new troubles will arise. Good fortune may turn her back upon us the next

time; and if she had in August last, this union would have been rent. Virginia acted better than could have been expected; and the militia return to all the States, full of federalism, and will help to diffuse their feelings among their connections. The spirit of insurrection had tainted a vast extent of country, besides Pennsylvania; and had all the disaffected combined and acted together, the issue would have been long protracted, and doubtful at last.

Will the people, seeing this pit open, approach it again by sending those to Congress who led them blindfold to its brink? Some exertion, indeed all that can be made, appears to me to be worth making — nay, more, indispensably necessary, wherever an *anti* is held up as a candidate; for I venture to speak as a prophet, — if they will send insurgents, they must pay for rebellions. This government is utterly impracticable, for any length of time, with such a resisting party to derange its movements. The people must interpose in the appointed way, by excluding mobocrats from legislation. I have faith that very plain dealing with them would work a change, even in Virginia. Ought not these considerations, which concern political life and death, to weigh down all others in New England? Will not the river men, who are so noted for good principles and habits, give them support in the election which, I hear, is yet undecided between General . . . . . and . . . . . ?

I know that men, breathing the air of New England, cannot credit the state of things in the back country and at the south. They must not judge of others by themselves. They must remember, that, for preserving a free government, a supine security is next to treachery. If all New England would move in phalanx, at least, we could hold our posts; and a short time will work changes at the south. Our good citizens must consent to be more in earnest in their politics, or submit to be less secure in their rights and property.

Your account of Thanksgiving has almost made me homesick; not a pumpkin pie have I seen. A Yankee is supposed to derive his principles from his keeping. Yet, when that is changed, he must not flinch.

Yours.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, December 17, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — Your and Mrs. G.'s approbation of my speech[1] is very flattering, even if your friendly partiality should have augmented it; for that partiality is worth as much as the praise of more impartial critics. Indeed, the resources of private friendship are peculiarly necessary to a man in such a government as ours. Bright as the prospect now is, I am decided one thing only will make it answer: to speak French,[2] a revolutionary effort, a rising, in mass, at the elections, to purify Congress from the sour leaven of antifederalism. So much faction as now exists in it will kill. Good men must not be duped. I stake my credit on it. The disease may and will produce many deaths. I know but one cure — the real federalism of the body of the electors. The lottery was three blanks to one prize in August last; and had not Harry Lee been Governor of Virginia, probably that region would have been *whiskeyed.* This State for a long time acted a whiskey part, till, by the zeal of New Jersey, the talents of the little Secretary,[3] the weight of the President's name, and bad management among the rioters, the tide turned in favor of government. Disaffection enough to begin, if not to complete, a revolution, actually existed. The talk of all rascals, that they are in favor of supporting government, ought to deceive only blockheads. In a more respectable case, did not the language, "We adore the British Constitution and dependence on that Crown," continue long after blood was spilt?

Excuse my croaking. I feel sure of turbulent times, unless more changes take place than I see any cause to expect. Time, I begin to think, is against us. State factions get better organized and more diffused. The best men are weary, and in danger of being driven out. The President,

[1] The speech referred to was made in the debate alluded to in the letter to Dwight, November 29.

[2] That is, in the French style.

[3] Hamilton.

with whom his country lives, will quit in disgust, or be in a few years with Timoleon and Epaminondas. As our system is now constituted, the reaction of party will be, in ordinary times, infinitely stronger than the action of the constituted authorities. These sentiments are delicate; but the *salus reipub.* depends, in my opinion, on their being adopted by the real patriots. I commit them, as I have often done before, to your discretion.

Your proposition for duly receiving the French minister, Houdard, is a pleasant one; but Blair McClenachan should not do all the kissing. Equality would require a negro. Fauchet is said to be safe in his place at present. Little is doing here. A storm will rise on the plan for sinking the debt. It is proposed to pay off the redeemable part yearly; but it will be necessary to prolong or render perpetual the revenue acts of the last session. That will be opposed, under the old pretext of a land tax in lieu of them, but really with a view of having no tax. Keep your eye on the progress of this business; for, as the faction will labor hard to take away, or at least to lessen, the purse of the government, they will be obliged to run on the shoals of a land tax to hide their design. To dismiss the troops, will be another object. No purse, no sword, on the part of authority; clubs, mobs, French influence, on the side of faction: A very intelligible arrangement.

Faction is no better, no weaker, now than formerly. The fall of the Chronicle would do credit to our General Court. Such rascals do not deserve the bread of any public. New York is thought to be doing badly in the city. I own the circumstance has augmented my glooms at the moment.

Your friend.

Lyman and Dearborn rechosen!

The inclosed, if published in the Orrery, might do a little. If sent to me, after publication, I would get it reprinted here. Virginia might be impressed. They elect in March.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 27, 1794.

My Dear Friend, — I have no reason to doubt that I have duly received all your favors; but your doubts excite others in me, whether I have not been very delinquent in acknowledging them. As a friend and brother, I need not, I hope, assure you how much I value your correspondence. I will try to deserve it better in future, as far as scribbling will support my claim. I have notified Mr. Fenno that Mr. Stebbins is at Springfield. The election of W. Lyman and Dearborn, and, as I believe, of Edward Livingston, at New York, almost gives me the hypo. I am confirmed in it: the crisis must come; — but I will not *bore* you with my vapors.

Mr. Jay's success is yet unascertained, but events help him; and if good sense had more to do with politics, I should expect to see faction in the gutter. The Methodists say, very justly, you cannot kill the devil. It would be against experience and the nature of man to look for as much art and industry on the right side as on the wrong; and therefore the federal cause will go down, or I am no conjurer.

I hear, with pleasure, of the health of your family, and of my two.[1] I long to see my friends, more than I can describe.

A man like Dr. Lathrop is too able to defend his errors, to yield them up, and least of all to do it when they are made doubly dear by being attacked. It is to be lamented, that a good man must be given up to base company and a vile cause. Colonel Pickering is mentioned as God of War; Wolcott to succeed Hamilton. This is however but report. France will finally help us by the madness or the sobriety of her example. The great point is to hold out till peace in Europe removes a part of the present support from faction. Thus, we may rub along a little while, but not long.

[1] That is, wife and son.

I feel a due portion of patriotic zeal for the success of your canal. Yet, pardon me, I could see it to more advantage unfinished in March next.

The German church in Fourth, near Arch street, was burned down last evening. It caught from the stove-pipe. It was a magnificent spectacle, but not worth thirty thousand pounds, which it was insured for, as it is said. The organ alone cost near five. The confusion and want of address were manifest, and strongly contrasted with the conduct at a Boston fire. Yet a gentleman assured me no place can match Philadelphia in these points. Practice has made Boston perfect.

Yours, truly.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 7, 1795.

My Dear Friend, — I do not neglect writing for the purpose of drawing from you complaints of my neglect. Yet I own my interpretation of your notice how seldom I write, is, that my letters have some value with you. As they have none here, allow me to send them to the best market. Seriously, I am more and more impressed with the sense of what I owe my friends, and my epistolary trade is one of the most gainful I can carry on. I am happy in the correspondence of a very few select friends, and I should be ashamed to think my part of the intercourse a burden. The public business is no excuse for my neglect, because idle men have less time than the busy.

The weather imposes on me the task of drawing my breath, which is for the most part a heavy burden. I get along, however, by throwing off almost every other. A great rain is falling, and I hope winter will venture his coy person immediately after. On the whole, I like the old contrivance of this world better than the new: hot weather in the dog days; cold and snow at Christmas. If I had to guide the plough, I should prefer October and April for

[illegible] to [illegible] colder winter. If the pines protect [illegible] from disease, I shall reverence your [illegible] and become a [illegible] changing the wood.

[illegible] that your [illegible] forwarding the [illegible] of the Connecticut might be [illegible] you will not deny that the candidates who have no [illegible] worth of character, seek occasions to [illegible] in every showy undertaking, and afterwards brag of their [illegible]. The electioneering spirit corrupts and [illegible] every thing. You, I know, prefer home to the forum of Congress. I confess I justify your opinion, and I hope I shall never give cause, in my own conduct or elections, to question that I approve the independence of your spirit. That would be called, by many, [illegible] pride. I admit the right a man has to seek an election, in case of a scolding wife, a smoky house, or a host of duns — three pleasant reasons.

The Senate in requiring notices of renouncing titles, prior to becoming citizens, may furnish our Chronicle with a subject. Caution: — it would have been more prudent to treat the silly motion with silence or ridicule. In the south, it may confirm their prejudices. But men of sense will need no further proof of the art and hypocrisy of the advocates.

Mr. Osgood's sermon is extolled. The good sense and boldness of the sentiments will work their way. The heathen in this State, and farther south, ought to have him sent as a missionary. The sermon is reprinting here. The proclamation by the President, for a Thanksgiving, will afford an opening for other clergymen to seek glory. Will any renowned *anti* vindicate the anarchists from the pulpit? — Parson Lyman or Dr. L.? I hope the respectable character of the latter will not be soiled by any such attempt. Sedgwick has a letter from the former, teeming with Jacobinism. Yet it would be unwise, perhaps unjust, to slight those two men.

Yours, &c.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, January 10, 1795.

My Dear Friend, — A circumstance, of a singular nature, has been mentioned repeatedly, and on so good authority, that I believe it. At a meeting of a county in Virginia, one Callender, the rival of Venable, the present member, gave at dinner, in a large company, this toast: — "A speedy death to General Washington." On some subsequent notice of the toast, (for I did not hear of any being taken at the dinner,) he said it would be for his glory to die soon. The prejudices of these people, and the savageness of their manners, will be evinced by any interpretation of this horrid toast; yet in South Carolina W. Smith and General Wynne, the two federalists, are rechosen, and the others are not. Benton, indeed, is rechosen; but, as he did not attend, his party is not known.

It is worthy of remark, that the disputatious turn of the House appears in quibbles on little things, as evidently as it did the last session in things of great importance. Our progress is slow, and the nature of the discussion trivial and stupid. Such a collection of Secretaries of the Treasury, so ready on questions of peace, war, and treaty, feel a competence to every thing, and discover to others an incompetence for any thing, except what, by the Constitution, they should be, — a popular check on the other branches. To prevent usurpation or encroachment on the rights of the people, they are inestimable; as executive agents, which our disorganizers contend for, they are so many ministers of destruction.

John Barnwell, the brother of Robert, is chosen from South Carolina. If he proves worthy of being Robert's brother, he will be a good member.

Taylor, when he resigned his senatorship, is said to have assigned, in his letter to the Assembly, as a reason, the extreme corruption of Congress and the President. This *morçeau* of madness and antifederalism is said to be suppressed. I wish the crackbrain could be convicted for

libelling the government. I presume you have heard the crow story, which has made his resignation so famous.

A Doctor McClurg, once a nominal director of the United States Bank, is the reputed author of Marcellus. I have the pleasure to see an edition of Manlius piled up in Fenno's office, for circulation among the heathen in the back parts of this State — among those who sit in darkness, and yet hate the light. Marcellus, Manlius, and Parson Osgood, have deserved well of the country.

I have scribbled a paragraph for the Centinel, respecting Wynne and Smith, which may *fix* the former.

I just learn that Jacob Reed, a zealous antigallican and federalist, is chosen senator in Mr. Izard's stead; and one Marshall, the best Fed in Kentucky, in place of Edwards. Here they turn out the members from the rebellious counties on the ground that, in a state of force and rebellion, the right of suffrage cannot be exercised. It is agreed to in the committee of the House, by eleven majority, and will pass. Yours.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, January 17, 1795. — Saturday morning.

My Dear Friend, — I was done over yesterday with the exertion of a noisy speech on sinking the public debt. That, and engagements the remainder of the day, prevented my writing to you till this late hour, although your last two letters, and the Orrery, afford me materials for several pages. The faction pretending, as usual, exclusive zeal to pay off the debt, and, as usual, opposing every measure for the purpose, seemed to take the ascendant on the question, to strike out the resolution to prolong the temporary taxes to the year 1801. This at last produced in me what Randolph calls personal excitement, and led me on to make a long speech, and a loud one, to take away, if possible, their popular cloak, and show *in puris naturalibus*, the loathness of the party to pay off the debt. It had, because it was the plain truth,

some effect. The doctrine that a land tax must be resorted to, has gravelled them. They begin to equivocate, and Madison speaks (now) hypothetically of the measure. He has some idea of digesting an apportionment, not a requisition says he, on the States, which they may spread over such taxable property as Congress could not reach. This jargon of hypocrisy convinced nobody, and yet plainly showed that at last they are unwilling and afraid to propose any tax for the debt. But the debate has confirmed the old fact, that the party propose a land tax, and a land tax only, for the purpose. Such a fact ought to make impression in New England. On the whole, we rise upon them and they are once more chopfallen.

Hamilton yesterday sent a letter, which arrived while I was speaking, but was not read till after I had done, announcing that he had digested and got ready a report on sinking the debt. The party were unprepared, and out of spirits to oppose its being directed to be laid before the House, and it passed, Lyman only opposing. This order to receive the report is a curiosity, especially after the vile debate on committing the President's message, inclosing Knox's letter. The report of Hamilton will be printed, and no doubt help the business. I have not been made acquainted with its contents or precise objects.

I hope Sam Cooper is not thrown off from the good men, by the attack on his father. Is it not possible to pacify his wrath, which I hear is roused by the *Jacobiniad?* The Boston poets are formidable, and would be guillotined, if the Robespierres whom they expose had the power.

In the debate (I had forgot to observe) that McDowell proposed a tax on transfers, as a fund for sinking the debt. What fund more proper or more efficient? The bottomless pit would not sink the debt lower.

Yours.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, January 20, 1795.

My Dear Friend. — Had your offence in the epistolary way been as aggravated as you state it, the letter would have been not only atonement, but supererogation — a stock of merit laid up against a rainy day. I am too proud, as well as too considerate of my own infirmity, [indolence] to arraign my friends for neglect of me when they do not write. I should prefer any solution of your forbearance to that of your cooling in point of regard. For I often draw consolation and pleasure from the reflection, that though I did not choose my enemies, I could not mend it by choosing; nor were I to choose over again, could I mend my list of friends.

I see no abatement of the rancor of party here, nor would it be reasonable to expect their temper best, when disappointment has done the most to sour it. Victory over party may procure a truce, in which they will take breath, and make their cartridges, but peace is out of the question. Government here is in the cradle, and good men must watch their own child, or it will die, or be made way with. It is therefore a chapter of comfort in my theory, that when events portend a crisis of extremity, the spirit of defence will rise in proportion to the violence of the attack, and this justice must be done our Catilines — they do all they can to raise and keep up the federal spirit to this revolutionary height, though not intentionally. On the whole, I hope more and fear rather less for our government than I did two months ago. This may be versatility; but I see the difficulty of opposing, which the *antis* conflict with, is sometimes more burdensome than of supporting government.

All measures for propping up public credit have been opposed, first because they hate the debt, and would pay it off, and secondly because they hate excises, and long for land taxes. Yet, lo! the principle of opposition becomes at last, by the turning round of business, a principle of action: thus they have trained their men to bawl for a reduction of the debt; and, now it is proposed and urged, they are gravelled;

for still they would oppose. Yet I flatter myself their common soldiers will fall off, because they do not see how the new opposition squares with the old style of declamation. Besides, as we are in full possession of the popular ground of paying off the debt, they are driven, by their hard luck, to oppose the reduction by clamoring against excises, and for the land tax, meaning really to do nothing. How will our clamorers like these manœuvres? how will they be able to go on with their patriots, who would tax carts and free coaches? Read the inclosed speech of Madison, and see this doctrine avowed; although, having heard that it will ruin them among our Yankees, they try to wrap up the land tax in the hypocrisy of a tax on *property*, which, rendered into English, you will see reads *land tax*. A report of the Secretary of the Treasury came in during the debate, and is ordered to be printed, urging the reduction of the debt.

I admire the *Jacobiniad*. The wit is keen, and who can deny its application? Regard to friends of the club.

Your affectionate friend.

I read with some indignation the Chronicle abuse of Dexter, for saying republicanism means any thing or nothing. They are no better than formerly. It is astonishing that they choose to hazard such gross misrepresentation. Either they are the biggest fools, or their readers the veriest dupes in the world. Unluckily too for them, Madison's speech, recommending land tax, comes out here on the day that the Chronicle asserts that the Madisonians are opposed to it, and that Mr. Sedgwick first proposed that measure.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 3, 1795.

My Dear Friend, — Your last letter, covering a Springfield paper, was very acceptable, though very short. Usually my value of your letters is guided by measure, the longest

the best. But the last assured me that all is well at Springfield; and as the canker-rash prevails in your town, it is peculiarly agreeable to hear from you and yours, and mine.

I like the article in your Spy, relating to the democratic societies, and their complaints of the violation of the liberty of the press, and have requested Fenno to republish it. Such comments on their inconsistency are read, because they are brief, and remembered because they are pointed, and make them ridiculous; and it is in human nature to approve the making others ridiculous.

The success of Mr. Jay will secure peace abroad, and kindle war at home. Faction will sound the tocsin against the treaty. I see a little cloud, as big as a man's hand, in Bache's paper, that indicates a storm. Two things will be attempted. First, before the event is known, to raise the expectation of the public, that we have every thing granted, and nothing given in return; and secondly, that the treaty, when published, has surrendered every thing. I think it probable that they will succeed in stirring up the fires of the south; for when have they shown a want of philosophy (or folly) in kindling a fire? We must wait for time, sometimes our friend, sometimes our foe, to help us out of our uncertainties and embarrassments.

The military establishment has generated war in the debates. Virginia would reduce. Economy is the plea, and as usual the zeal by saving, to have cash to reduce the debt. The usual reproaches on the advocates of standing armies, and perpetual public debts, fell from them of course. But I think they are not likely to prevail, as the profuse expense of militia is well proved in the discussion. To reduce the regulars, and swell the expense of the Indian war, as well as to protract its period, is the tendency of Virginia politics.

Four weeks from this day I gallop Springfield-ward. Judge, from your own emotions, with what impatience.

Yours, &c.

Would not Judge Sumner be the most eligible candidate to oppose S. A.[1] as Governor? Sedgwick and some others, as well as your humble servant, incline to the opinion.

[1] Samuel Adams.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, February 24, 1795.

DEAR FRIEND, — The bill for reduction of the public debt, has passed the House. It pins fast the funding system, converts the poison of faction into food for federalism; it puts out of the reach of future mobocrats the funds, and the control of them. It is therefore the finale, the crown of federal measures. You will naturally wonder that such men should suffer such a step to be taken. Shame at being glaringly inconsistent, and real inefficiency of character, kept them back. Yet this triumph is clouded. The clauses to provide, *bonâ fide*, for the unsubscribed debt, and for the discharge of a certain species of the loan-office certificates, were thrown out. The old three per cent. men and principles were revived. I except, much to his honor, Sedgwick. Prudence prevented many of us, who think as formerly, from pressing the right principle, which would have been in vain. To make the subscription of the small residuum of debt compulsory, is base in principle, and not excused even by the pretence of necessity. Hamilton retires, full of the horrors, on this account. It is truly lamentable that the best men are so incorrect in principle. The folly of vindicating federal measures, on the mean plea of expediency, is apparent. "What," said the compulsion men, "would you give the foes of your system (meaning Charles Petit, &c.) more than the subscribing creditors?" I answer — yes, if obliged by contract to do so. I have long seen that our measures are supported by prejudices, not less erroneous than those of their opposers.

A letter from Monroe appears in Brown, and will to-morrow be in Fenno. It should be republished as from Monroe. Mr. Randolph has told several persons that it is; and it would greatly assist the antidote, to know that it was sent from one who had swallowed the poison and was cured. Strange, that Monroe should warn us against Jacobins! So the world turns round. At the birthright bill, Ben. F. Bache acted as manager. Yet his paper teems with daily abuse of courtly sycophancy. The poor creature should not

be brought into the danger of suffering by contact with *courts*. I will keep my temper, and be silent in regard to D.'s election. No treaty yet arrived. The Senate will be specially called to ratify, or not. No French treaty is here spoken of. Are not their resources on the decline, as moderatism is now the order of the day? A million stirling, will not, I think, more than defray the expense of four days. Neither rapine, nor regular taxes, can long support this immense expense. Thank God, it is their affair, not ours. The Thanksgiving has helped tone the public mind. Tom Paine has kindly cured our clergy of their prejudices.

The Georgia land speculation calls for vigor in Congress. Near fifty millions acres, sold by Georgia for a song, threatens Indian, Spanish, and civil, wars. Energy at first may prevent all of them.

Yours, truly.

I have requested a receipt, from Mrs. Fitzsimons, of the catholic and only true way of making buckwheat cakes.

Inclosed is Monroe's undoubted authentic letter. If the anti-gallican sentiments of the poem should not shock your nerves, do get B. R. to republish that and Monroe in his Centinel. The French mania is in the train of being cured, and such doses should be got down by the patients. Really, more truth is told, and it is better received, than formerly.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 24, 1795.

My Dear Friend,—

. . . . . .

The newspapering a woman is an outrage I had hoped Hottentots would not commit. Is Vermont more enlightened than Whidah or Angola? Otherwise, I should think, they would not endure such abuse of types. I feel happy that

they did not praise me, as they did Dayton. It is no little consolation that the daughters of Colonel Worthington, from good sense, and their remembrance of tory times, are able to restrain their just sensibilities within proper bounds. I am rather flattered, than insulted, by the suggestion that a very deserving wife influences me. And for what, my friend, am I, like a turkey the day before Thanksgiving, set up to be shot at — a target for the popgun-men to practise upon for learning marksmanship? For the immense salary of a first clerk in a public office. I feel a spirit of indignant independence, although it does not, I confess, require much spirit of any sort to despise the attacks of the despised clubbists.

. . . . . .

B. Bache appeared as manager at the ballroom (birth-night ball.) A pretty fellow, to fill his paper with insults on the celebration, and yet act as manager. . . . .[1]

The celebration was unusually demonstrative of respect, &c., to our great chief. He rises over enemies, like the sun scattering the mists. The Thanksgiving has keyed up the public mind to federalism. Dr. Smith's sermon is liberally subscribed for, and will be spread over the United States. He treats French madness and wickedness very plainly.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 28, 1795.

DEAR FRIEND, — Congress is too inefficient to afford the stuff for a letter. No public body exists with less energy of character to do good, or stronger propensities to mischief. We are Frenchmen, democrats, *antifeds;* every thing but Americans, and men of business.

I have a right to find fault with others, though I do nothing myself, as I am unfit for labor. We scarcely think

[1] A few somewhat *spicy* words are here omitted.

that a war raging on our coast requires any steps. The Chronicle called our disposition towards France rebellious, and we seem to concur in the sentiment. Jacobinism and Gallomania are stronger here than anywhere else. The last place that will be rid of this plague is the very one which, it is fondly believed by many, cannot catch it. Your General Court, I trust, is much better, and that is precious, as it inspires confidence in a good issue to the election, for Governor Sumner is the only man. All feds must join or die; for another *anti* Governor would ruin the harmony of the State, and overthrow all federalism. Yours.

Watch and pray for the first Monday, April.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, August 24, 1795. — Monday.

My Dear Sir, — Court week is over, and I am alive, and beginning to take long breaths. Not half the jury actions were tried. My share of them kept me in a throng of people at my own house, and on the way to and from court; and there, the heat, the crowd, and the effort of speaking, almost did me over. Once I sat down, and left my ally to finish on the same side. I could not sleep at night, in consequence of overdoing at court. But a change of weather recruited me, and I am now as well as usual. So particular an account of the court may serve to show you how far I am yet from sound health. To mend my crazy frame, the scheme of the long-deferred journey to Newport is resumed, for the last of this week, and I trust will be executed. Unless the cold of the fall season should brace me up, I shall scarcely earn my six dollars a day at Congress work.

. . . . . .

I hope your family is free from medicine, and the necessity of making use of it. If I had my newspaper riches in possession, I would hire a hack, and make a visit to Spring-

field; but as my treasure lies as far out of my way, as it is out of that of moths and thieves, I am limited to a one-horse chaise, and that forbids our going in caravan, namely, man and wife, girl and child. I drop the scheme of going to Vermont, as the rains have made the roads bad, and I have no companion, and am not well enough to go without one. The heat has been more trying to invalids, I believe, than any former season, as it has been accompanied with excessive dampness. The rains have totally drowned more than two thousand acres of meadow between Dedham and Newton, on Charles river; about twelve or thirteen acres of mine lie in soak. We are sadly abused by the millers at Newton upper falls. Not one drop of flood water would be left after two days, if we had the command of the stream, to remove the dams, and only one rock at the falls. The improvement of the soil could not fail to be capital, if it were not drowned. I have my barn full of hay, as it is, but I should have had some to sell, had not the flood spoiled the meadows. It will be two years at least before the grass will recover itself in quantity or quality.

My house is two thirds plastered; the masons quitted it to avoid court week, but I expect them back every hour. We shall be able to effect our removal to the new house with ease in October; but for the greater caution, I propose to delay it till November. Three months ought to dry plaster sufficiently. Our lodging chamber was plastered the eleventh of August, and the room we sleep in is almost the only place to apprehend taking cold in. The time of my men is so taken up by the masons, &c., that my garden is buried in weeds, and there seems to be no end to the job of making the glacis and clearing away the rubbish.

. . . . . .

On the whole, our prospect of neighborhood in future is fifty per cent. improved from the state we found it in, when we removed here from Boston. Still we think it an essential part of our *summum bonum*, that our Springfield friends should visit us once a year. I am loath to give up the idea of Colonel and Mrs. W.'s coming.

I find my paper strangely filled up, as Mr. Morehead would say, with emptiness. Not a word of politics in almost three pages! — is it not strange?

My letter by Mr. Boylston expressed to you and Colonel W. a vehement suspicion the President would not ratify the treaty. This was grounded on confidential information that he had gone to Virginia, and had not done it. Since that time, I am happy to learn, through a channel that I believe pure, that he has ratified it. Now let the heathen rage. If the government dare act right, I still believe it can maintain it. The time will come when faction will make it afraid; nay, when it will become the instrument of faction, and be as little disposed as able, to uphold order. Is it not manifest that the violence of this storm springs from the anticipation of the election to the Presidency? The New Hampshire man is encouraged to hope the second place. Jefferson's party seize the moment to discredit their most dreaded rival, Jay. Clinton's and Adams's parties in the two States, and State parties elsewhere, enlist under the banner of the Jefferson leaders. Does this augur an unbiased appointment, or a cordial support, of Washington's successor? An experienced sailor would say, these little whirlwinds of dry leaves and dirt portend a hurricane. How can a government be managed in adverse times; and when the chief magistrate asks support against the faction of his rival, but can give none, or almost none, to the laws — when we see that the splendid name of the present possessor, though stronger than a host, scarcely protects him, and the government is but just spared from destruction by the mobs of Philadelphia, Boston, &c., although their complaining mouths are actually stopped by the showers of manna? A ship that is sinking, or near sinking, at her anchors in the port, will drown her crew if they venture to sea in her. We shall, at any rate, get along for some time; and if the country people see that the wounds attempted to be given by the mobs aforesaid will be mortal, they will become alarmed, and afford such a support to law and order, as possibly may enable government to stand its ground. It is a crisis full of instruction, perhaps of fate.[1]

Yours, &c.

[1] The disappointment and anger of the democratic leaders, when it was ascertained that Mr. Jay's mission was successful, were very strongly manifested. That party had rather lost ground by the controversy between our government and Citizen Genet, and perhaps also by the extravagances of the clubs. But the political operation of the general exasperation against Eng-

Let the above be in confidence with you and discreet friends.

P. S. . . . I saw Sam Dexter lately, on his return from a court in Rhode Island. He says, there they boast of their being right respecting the treaty, while Boston goes wrong. Formerly, they say, they were deemed outlaws against all government, and now they are firmer and steadier than Massachusetts. Connecticut is also right; — *ça ira.* The treaty will go in spite of mobs.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, September 13, 1795.

My Dear Friend, — I found your letter of the 4th, at Mrs. Phillips's. I had scarcely read it, and digested my wrath against the puppy who opened my packet by Spencer Whiting, when I found your brother Josiah in the street, who brought a welcome cargo from Colonel W. and Secretary Sophy. As to the letter that was broken open, Mr. Whiting would not do such a thing, and how could any other person have the opportunity? It contained some treason, I suppose, though I do not remember what; not so bad I think as a former one, full of gloomy fears that a certain

land was very much in their favor; and the rejection of Mr. Jay's treaty would have an apparent tendency to bring them into power at the next election. Accordingly, all the machinery of denunciation, tumultuous meetings, processions, effigies, and mobs, was brought to bear upon the public mind, and the unfortunate delay of the President, in the ratification, (a delay partly owing, no doubt, to the questionable counsels of Edmund Randolph, the Secretary of State,) encouraged the hopes, and so increased the violence of the opposition.

There is very little in the treaty itself that accounts for such a warm, and as it now appears, extravagant opposition. It proved to be a good one. It provided a full and honorable indemnity for the spoliations on our commerce, and we lived very contentedly, from 1815 to 1842, upon a treaty very much like it, only somewhat less in our favor. It did not settle the great question of impressment. That never has been, and perhaps never will be, settled in express terms by any treaty whatever, between the two nations. Time, and the increase of our national strength, have made diplomacy on that subject quite unimportant.

great man would shrink from the storm of popular fury. I care little what use the man may think fit to make of it. I lose my timidity, as to popular questions, almost daily, and am ready to indulge a surly sort of independence of spirit. Old Nick seems to begin his government, and his accession is welcomed by as much loyalty and zeal among his subjects, as any sovereign can boast. Every passion, every prejudice, of a certain part of our citizens in the large towns is blown up to a pitch of fanaticism. Let the country folks keep firm and steady, and these triflers in their opinions, but demons in their excesses, will be restrained from doing irreparable mischief. The demagogues seem to resolve to bring the business to a crisis, to corrupt and inflame our own citizens as much as they can, and, by reënforcing their corps with a French force, to overcome the government of their country. I see no objection to joining the issue tendered; for governments are oftenest lost by flinching from the trial, and if ours has any strength, it cannot use it at a more favorable moment. Washington at the head, Pittsburg at its feet,[1] pockets full of money, prosperity shining like the sun on its path. If it falls, it will prove that it had no strength, and must have fallen soon had not this foe prevailed. The sooner we are rid of it, if it be really good for nothing, the better. I think it good, and that every real patriot will hazard his life to defend it.

Since my return from Newport, I have drooped a good deal. Accident, or the operation of the season, has deranged my stomach and head. Often oppressed, always languid, with little appetite, less rest, I have thought myself, for ten days past, duly qualified and fully authorized to use and enjoy the vapors as amply and freely as other invalids. I choose, however, to delay my use and occupation of this most delightful privilege, till I have trotted my horse a great many times over all the roads near our village; till I have tried the use of meat and stimulants, abstaining from vegetables, &c.; till cold weather has arrived, without effect, and if possible, till I die. My actual complaints are trivial, but the cause they spring from is not. The *vis vitæ* is on the ebb.

[1] The neighborhood of Pittsburg was the scene of the "Whiskey Insurrection."

The momentum of my blood is impaired. My case is more that of an old man than a sick one. I fully believe great precaution is necessary to secure my recovery, and I am far from being discouraged in respect to its success.

. . . . . .

My friend, is it not enough to make a man enamored of politics? Here am I, scarcely able to ride thirty miles in a day, and that only on resting one day to prepare me for proceeding, going to carry my musket in the wars of politics, leaving my wife to mope alone in my new house, under circumstances of uncommon discouragement. I will try my best not to go crazy as she approaches the period of her trial. Have I not already got the vapors, think you? This subject brings them, when I think of it. I will not think of it, therefore.

Never, probably, could Colonel W. choose a time to visit us when his company would be more cheering. In proportion as the tenure of my life becomes obviously more precarious, I value the society of my friends and connections. In that way I turn the hours of life to profit and enjoyment.

I wish you health and happiness, as also to Mrs. Dwight and the children.

Yours, &c.

I hope your trip to Monson has been agreeable. My trees afford rather more than a promise of a treat of peaches.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, September 22, 1795.

DEAR FRIEND, — I have just returned from a freezing ride with Frances to Boston. Such changes from heat to cold, and both extreme, were, I believe, never before known. I have suffered by both. I was very ill last week for three days, and lost more than half my strength. The cold recruits it again, but too much like a continued cold bath. I am

told my case is nervous, bilious, a disease of the liver, atrophy, &c., as different oracles are consulted. I am forbidden and enjoined to take almost every thing. *I* prescribe, and take meat, some cider, a trotting horse, keep as warm as I can, abstain from excess of every kind, and I have still faith I may recruit; although more than half of those who complain without being able to tell what ails them, go to their long home. I know how tedious valetudinary accounts usually are, but I think your friendly concern will not be less engaged in this part of my letter, than if it were filled with politics, as usual.

There is a buzzing rumor in town, that letters from the ex-minister, Fauchet, have been intercepted by a British armed vessel, and sent to our government, containing an account of the disposal of sums of French secret-service money, and stating sums paid to our late Secretary of State[1] and others, (one senator, it is said) whose names are not mentioned. That in consequence, Mr. Randolph immediately resigned.[2] Who doubted that French crowns were scattered to hire American traitors? Such a fact ought to alarm even stupid zealots for the French. *Sat verbum.* More will soon transpire.

Should doubts exist in regard to my being able to travel in a stage the whole journey, possibly I may go by a packet from Providence to New York, which would be comparatively easy. This idea augments my solicitude for Colonel W.'s visit. But you and Mrs. D. are, I hope, more easy of persuasion. Come and see us, which will be a cordial to your friend.

[1] Edmund Randolph.

[2] This transaction was very lamely and imperfectly explained by Mr. Randolph, in his published vindication.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, October 3, 1795.

DEAR SIR, — I think you will have heard of my having had a relapse for some weeks past. Extreme weakness, want of appetite, want of rest, &c.

. . . . . .

I despair, or have but faint expectations of reaching Philadelphia at the first of the session, if ever; but I believe the cool weather, and the resolute adherence to the tonic plan, will raise me again upon my legs (which have been of late almost useless) before December. We earnestly wish a visit from you, and our other Springfield friends. Remember it is a duty of charity to visit the sick.[1]

Our Common Pleas Court is sitting here, but I decline, and indeed am quite unable, to attend it. It is the less to be lamented, as it does not rain fees. It rains incessantly almost every thing besides. The weather is generally bad for me. I hope soon the beginning of the bright days of the fall, which I fancy will renovate my old fabric.

The mobs are quiet, I hear, in Boston; and Dedham has not the spirit to raise any.

Yours, and Mrs. D.'s very true friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, November 18, 1795.

DEAR FRIEND, — When kings and princes are sick, it is usual to publish daily bulletins of their condition. The Convention caused the report on the health of the late Louis XVI.,

[1] The writer's health broke down at about this period, in a very dangerous and alarming manner; and, although improved subsequently, it never was fully restored.

and afterwards of the Dauphin, to be inserted in the bulletin. My pride, though of the true blue democratic sort, finds some relief, in the resemblance of my weekly employment at letter-writing, to the bulletin aforesaid. Indeed I rise higher than sick kings and princes, because the mob and their deadly enemies indulged their curiosity by reading the printed report; and it would wrong my Springfield friends to make the comparison, after having mentioned that.

You will judge, by the levity of my style, that I am better, and you will judge right. I recruited so fast the last week, that I began to reproach myself for pretending to be an invalid. I walked, sometimes hoed in the garden, and rode out with the best spirits. On Thursday last I rode four miles to visit parson Bradford, and returned without fatigue. That day, George Minot, and parson Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. Gore, came to visit us, and I found them unexpectedly on my return. In the afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Cabot came, and other company succeeded. The long attention, and your wife will say, the incessant talking, tired me a good deal.

. . . . . .

I am very happy to find that the spirit of one hundred thousand barrels of Hampshire cider is all federal. It will beat as much whiskey, and twice as much peach brandy. It will not be the fault of our wicked faction, if the cider spirit is not put to the proof. The ball will soon open in the federal House of Representatives. I expect Old Nick will be unchained. . . .

I have bought, and am going to present to farmer Gore, two queer looking sheep, their legs short like the creeping sort of fowls, their shoulders growing splay, like the rickets.[1] Their

[1] This prepossessing variety of the sheep family was well known in New England as the Otter breed. Since the introduction of the Merino, our farmers have manifested more anxiety to improve the quality of the wool than to perpetuate the questionable advantages of short legs and rickety shoulders, and the Otter sheep are to be reckoned among the things that were. They are described in Livingston's Essay on Sheep (published at New York in 1809) in terms of some sensibility. The writer says, "But what particularly characterizes these sheep, and from which, together with the length of their bodies, they probably took their name, is the extreme shortness of their legs, which are also turned out in such a manner as to render them rickety. They cannot run or jump, and even walk with some difficulty. They appear as if their legs had been broken, and set by an awkward surgeon. To me there is something so disgusting in the sight of a flock of these poor lame animals,

wool is said to be more abundant, and they cannot climb fence. Having less activity, they are expected to fatten better in the same pasture than other sheep. A Mr. Seth Wight, of Dover, found a couple of lambs, such as I describe, dropped by his flock, and he has at length a whole flock of the kind. They begin to draw some attention, and for the reasons I have suggested, they seem to deserve an uncommon share of it. My farming zeal has so far abated, that I prefer getting experiments made by others, to making them myself. I gave eight dollars for the sheep, and that is cheaper than to keep them at home.

I am trying to raise new breeds of potatoes from the seed. The labor and expense of this petty operation suit my laziness, as well as my economy. Regards to friends.

Yours, truly, &c.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER — (IN CONGRESS.)

Dedham, December 10, 1795.

DEAR SIR, —

. . . . . .

The public expectation is up, and if a good deal of mischief should not be done, we shall be disappointed, agreeably, I confess. I please myself with the hope that faction will be frustrated, because the heads of the party will aim at more, and worse, than the wrong-headed but not very ill-disposed on their side, will support. To make one branch directly

that even a strong conviction of their superior utility could hardly induce me to keep them. The only advantage that can result from this deformity is, that they cannot pass over stone walls, and are confined by slight fences. Whether this will counterbalance the sufferings to which they must be liable in a deep snow, the impossibility of driving them to distant pastures, or to market, and the facility with which they may be destroyed by dogs, is a matter of calculation with the economical farmer. Those, however, who possess a grain of taste, who take a pleasure in the sportive gambols of their lambs, or who delight rather in perfecting than maiming the works of nature, will seldom be induced to propagate, beyond what is absolutely necessary, an infirmity which abridges the short enjoyments of a helpless and useful animal." "What was at first, probably an accidental circumstance, has become the basis of a new and unsightly race."

attack the other two, or even to do it as indirectly as the thing will admit of, seems to me too obvious a mischief to be concealed or disguised. Therefore I do my best to believe that the moderate men on the wrong side will vote against proceeding to extremities.

I lie on the gridiron of impatience, as still as I can, expecting by next week's post to have some facts, and better ground for conjectures.[1]

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, December 30, 1795.

My Dear Friend,—

. . . . . .

You reckon a good event to the session of Congress, with more confidence than I can find a footing for. I count fifty-six *antis*, forty-nine feds, of the one hundred and five members of the House of representatives. It is possible that some may shrink from the edge of the pit, to which their leaders would push them. They may express a dislike of the treaty, in the answer to the speech, and be so much blockheads as to suppose the expression of such a dislike, not only harmless, but an essential duty. But they will be more reluctantly brought to act with effect against the execution of the treaty. They will not impeach the President. What are we to hope from a body so deeply infected with the spirit of folly or jacobinism, but continual efforts to disorganize? It will be a gymnasium in which all the turbulent passions will be disciplined, and grow strong by exercise.

I repeat my prediction with more faith than ever; a crisis will soon come. It may be delayed, but cannot be prevented. Mr. King writes to me, that he hears Mr. Madison says, it is necessary to express the sense of the representatives on the treaty. I rely on the good disposition of the New England people, but when a government *will* go wrong, what

[1] The contest upon the treaty, though daily expected, did not begin till February.

can individuals do? When a house is divided against itself, it cannot be held up by main strength. The House, by expressing any opinion in disapprobation of the other two, will bring on a new state of things. Faction will then have one branch, and the friends of order will cling to the President and Senate. If such a crisis can be produced, and is nearly arrived, in the midst of prosperity, peace, and knowledge, and while the government is administered with integrity, and with Washington at the head, — does it warrant very sanguine expectations of future tranquillity, when adversity, disturbance, and panic, shall prevail; when the hated head of one party shall exact obedience from the other; when the ruling party shall, as all ruling parties will, abuse its power sometimes, and commit blunders at others? I renounce this topic, lest I should fill my page with it, and lose my spirits.

. . . . . .

Your affectionate friend and brother.

A few inches of snow have fallen this morning, and it still snows, but as the wind is not far from south-east, it will soon stop. Should a good body of it fall, possibly I may tackle my covered sleigh, and go as far as New Haven. Thence to New York, trust Providence. This is only in my brain at present. I could not bear the stage, but I could, I think, travel in a hack or sleigh.

I have read Sedgwick's great speech. Things wear a threatening face.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER.

Dedham, January 4, 1796.

Dear Sir, — Your favor of the 19th is very consoling. Party has expected nothing but triumphs at this meeting of Congress; and when party triumphs, the conquered must be dragged at the victor's chariot wheels. It is a childish comfort that many enjoy, who say the minority aim at *place* only, not at the overthrow of government. They aim at

setting mobs above law, not at filling places which have a known legal responsibility. The struggle against them is therefore *pro aris et focis;* it is for our rights and liberties, words which we have a better right to use than those who make them ridiculous by having them always in their mouths.

Does not R.'s [1] vindication confound the wicked faction? The first paragraph of number ten evinces designs unfriendly to the United States too bad to be intrusted to his (Fauchet's) colleagues, and on which R.'s precious confessions throw a satisfactory light. The design may be presumed to relate to the whiskey rebellion, as that seems to be the burden of the song. F.'s sympathy of feeling, and his approbation, go along with the whiskey rebels and the faction in Congress. It is truly important that our farmers should be made to comprehend this instructive truth. It will keep them out of the power of the tempters in the seaports, and their mobs; and when our farmers in Worcester and Hampshire are right, will W. L. dare to go wrong as formerly? Could not S. L. use some effectual remonstrances with his namesake? Is it not worth the trouble, little as the merit or stability of the former may be deemed? I wish to see J. B. V. left alone in our list. I write, as you will see, in confidence. There has not been a time when I conceived the country was so well prepared to take right impressions. My health is undoubtedly improving, and though I do not expect to be able to travel in a stage for a long time, I think easy journeys in a hack or sleigh would be practicable in a short time. My physicians who encourage this expectation do it with a strict proviso that I hold my tongue in Congress.

Yours, with affectionate regard.

[1] Randolph's.

TO JEREMIAH SMITH.

Dedham, January 18, 1796.

My Dear Friend, — You have deserved well of the country for writing so punctually and so fully, so wittily and so wisely. I am glad you abstain from scandal, because you know I hate it, yet abuse Mr. Thatcher, if you please, for his not writing to me, and I shall esteem the favor in proportion to your known repugnance to the task. I think spiritedly, and almost resolve to go on to Philadelphia. Should this snow last, I am half resolved to jingle my bells as far as Springfield, within a week. That, however, is a crude purpose ripening in my brain. To-morrow I go to my loyal town of Boston, in my covered sleigh, by way of experiment of my strength, which will prove just nothing, as it is no exercise. More of this, and more decidedly, in my next. I am, I believe, unfit for any fatigue, or for business. I go with a fixed design to be useless. Does that surprise you?

I have read two Camilluses[1] on the constitutionality of the treaty; so much answer to so little weight of objection is odds. He holds up the ægis against a wooden sword. Jove's eagle holds his bolts in his talons, and hurls them, not at the Titans, but at sparrows and mice. I despise those objections in which blockheads only are sincere.

Our Governor has not yet delivered his most democratic speech, although it is the second week of the court-sitting. To-morrow wisdom opens her mouth. It is said, he has twice or thrice new modelled his preachment, as he was led by hopes and fears of the temper of the members, finding no anti-treaty stuff would be well received, it is to be supposed. So says rumor. Your despatches are referred to a committee of the whole, and if any part shall be found to demand a more detailed answer, it shall be sent by the next post. Whether you *did* play the fool, or not, when the flag was delivered, you *seem* to have done it.[2] Such parade to check

[1] By Hamilton.

[2] The presentation of the French flag took place on the first day of January, 1796. It was accompanied with much ceremony, and both Houses of Congress passed rather sentimental resolutions on the occasion.

enthusaism! Oh stuff! Is it necessary to show zeal for the power of France, to evince regard for liberty? You remark justly, "Reason is a slim underpinning for government." But our reason is no less wild than our passions. Our very wise folks think a man false to his own country, if he is not a partisan of some foreign nation.

Your friend.

TO JEREMIAH SMITH.

Mamaroneck, at Mrs. Horton's, 27 miles east from New York, February 3, 1796.— Wednesday morning.

My Dear Friend, — Here I am, *per varios casus*, through thick and thin; *jactatus et terris*, the sleigh often on bare ground; *vi superûm*, and then there was great wear and tear of horseflesh; *tantœne animis iræ*, such is my patriotic zeal to be useless in Congress. I give you a translation to save you trouble, and I have the *most intimate persuasion* [1] that it is as near the original as the copies of Mr. Fauchet's despatches, number three and six. I left Springfield Saturday morning, and came on to Hartford, very sick all the way. But I assure you, solemnly, I survived it, and was well the next morning. Lodged at New Haven Sunday night, at Norwalk Monday night. The snow grew thin at New Haven, and was nearly gone in the cartway at Stamford. There I procured a coachee from a Mr. Jarvis, who was very obliging, and no democrat, his name notwithstanding. Came on wheels to this place, and slept; waked and found a snow-storm pelting the windows. It still continues, and I have sent back the coachee sixteen miles to Mr. Jarvis, and wait for the sleigh. Fate, perhaps, ordains that it will thaw by the time it comes back; so much uncertainty is there in all the plans of man! The novelty of this grave reflec-

[1] In Mr. Randolph's published vindication, a letter was introduced from Fauchet, stating, among other things, that he had a *most intimate persuasion* that he had misunderstood Mr. R.'s application.

tion will recommend it to you. To-morrow expect to hear the bells ring, and the light-horse blow their trumpets, on my reaching New York. If Governor Jay will not do that for me, let him get his treaty defended by Camillus and such understrappers. I intend to pass two days there, and three more will, I trust, set me down in Philadelphia. Do not let me go down to the pit of the Indian Queen. It is Hades, and Tartarus, and Periphlegethon, Cocytus, and Styx, where it would be a pity to bring all the piety and learning that he must have, who knows the aforesaid infernal names. Pray leave word at the said Queen, or, if need be, at any other Queen's, where I may unpack my weary household gods. I am the better for the journey, although I have, at least three times, been so ill as to come near fainting. My country's good alone could draw a man so sick from home, — saving that I am not sick, and shall do my country no good. That, however, is not allowed by counsel, to impair the obligation to pay me six dollars per day. Forbearing to be mischievous is said to be a valid consideration. I shall not prove a troublesome lodger, nor call for little messes; a slice of dry bread at noon, wine-whey frequently at bedtime, will be all the addenda to the common attendance. Your offer to lodge with me in the same house is really very friendly, as you might well expect to find me both stupid and hyp'd. If I should prove otherwise and better, it will be a just reward for your generous friendship.

Yours, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 11, 1796.

Dear Friend, — I arrived here the 9th, and am, after a day's discomposure by the journey, the better for the exercise. Several times, on the way, I was very ill. I should have sent you an account of myself, had I known where a letter would hit you. This doubt will shorten this epistle.

I am now in Congress. The House is too hot for me,

although the business is cool and stupid enough; election of Smith, of Virginia. Faction is preparing its mines, and getting all ready for an explosion. Many think it will not be fired. I know very little, as yet, of the views of parties. Massachusetts has given faction a blow by the answer to the speech, and the contempt of Virginia's revolutionary amendments. This State treats the latter very cavalierly, and marks a most spirited federalism.

Judge Sumner would kill faction in Massachusetts, if he was Governor.

Your affectionate friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, February 16, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — I see, by the Centinel, your name is on the list of the majority, on the question of amendments. Still I think it prudent to address this to Springfield.

My health is the better for the journey. I doubt whether I could have effected it on wheels, as with all the accommodation of a sleigh, and all the precautions I could use, and although sixteen days on the road, I was several times near a full stop, being so unwell as to unfit me to travel. I am here, however, and as the weather is mild, and is usually very fine from this date for three months, I believe my chance of recovery is mended by the situation I am in.

. . . . . .

I rejoice with you, that the spirit of our Massachusetts legislature is so adverse to desperate innovation as the yeas and nays indicate. I hope, however, that many of the minority are opposed to the Virginia amendments, but voted as they did on other grounds, for I conceive it demonstrable on the most approved principles, vouched by experience, that the said amendments are not merely unfriendly to, but utterly subversive of, a free republican government.

Disorganizers never sung a more lamentable dirge. France

is robing herself in *costume*, the uniforms of her three branches. Is not that worse than titles? The United States behold the failure of the schemes of foreign corruption and domestic faction; the States, one after another, fulminating contempt on Virginia and Co.; as, for example, the ironical and sarcastic resolves of Pennsylvania. Every such proceeding chills the Catilines here, like the touch of the torpedo. Whether the anti-treaty resolutions will be moved in Congress is doubted by some. I believe they will be moved, and I fear will be carried. Others think they will fail. The unconstitutionality of the treaty is too ridiculous a piece of sophistry for men of sense to maintain. A direct vote that it is bad, disgraceful, and ruinous, is said to be resolved on by the party.

The whisperers of secret history say that the flag of France was presented to the President, after a design and an attempt to get it received by the House of Representatives, thus to throw the President into the background; but finding it would not do, the mode adopted was the only one.

A majority of wrong heads is said to be in the House. If so, and good laws are impeded, as usual, let the blame fall on those who hold the power of acting or stopping action.

. . . . . .

Your friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, March 9, 1796.

My Dear Friend, — I sit now in the House, and, that I may not lose my temper and my spirits, I shut my ears against the sophisms and rant against the treaty, and divert my attention by writing to you.

Never was a time when I so much desired the full use of my faculties, and it is the very moment when I am prohibited even attention. To be silent, neutral, useless, is a situation not to be envied. I almost wish . . . . . was

here, and I at home, sorting squash and pumpkin seeds for planting.

It is a new post for me to be in. I am not a sentry, not in the ranks, not in the staff. I am thrown into the wagon, as part of the baggage. I am like an old gun, that is spiked, or the trunnions knocked off, and yet am carted off, not for the worth of the old iron, but to balk the enemy of a trophy. My political life is ended, and I am the survivor of myself, or rather a troubled ghost of a politician, that am condemned to haunt the field of battle where I fell. Whether the government will long outlive me is doubtful. I know it is sick, and, many of the physicians say, of a mortal disease. A crisis now exists, the most serious I ever witnessed, and the more dangerous, because it is not dreaded. Yet, I confess, if we should navigate the federal ship through this strait, and get out again into the open sea, we shall have a right to consider the chance of our government as mended. We shall have a lease for years — say four or five; not a freehold — certainly not a fee-simple.

How will the Yankees feel and act when the day of trial comes? It is not, I fear, many weeks off. Will they let the casuists quibble away the very words, and adulterate the genuine spirit, of the Constitution? When a measure passes by the proper authorities, shall it be stopped by force? Sophistry may change the form of the question, may hide some of the consequences, and may dupe some into an opinion of its moderation when triumphant, yet the fact will speak for itself. The government cannot go to the halves. It would be another, a worse government, if the mob, or the leaders of the mob in Congress, can stop the lawful acts of the President, and unmake a treaty. It would be either no government, or instantly a government by usurpation and wrong.

March 12.

The debate is yet unfinished, and will continue some days longer. I beg you let . . . . . have the paper, after you have done with it.

I think we shall beat our opponents in the end, but the conflict will light up a fierce war.

Your friend.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, March 11, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — Mr. Giles has just finished a great speech, and our friend Sedgwick is now making another. Nothing will be decided till the next week. The manifest force of argument is on our side. Madison spun cobweb yesterday — stated five constructions of the Constitution, and proceeded to suggest the difficulties in each, but was strangely wary in giving his opinion. Conscience made him a coward. He flinched from an explicit and bold creed of anarchy. Giles has no scruples, and certainly less sense. Pray attend to the debate. I am not able to stay in the House all the time ; expect therefore a broken history from my pen. The party abhors being drawn into the argument on the construction of the Constitution, on this question for a call of papers. They see the disadvantage of setting up a claim to unlock the cabinet, and a right to keep the key in future. Montezuma may, and I hope he will, set down his foot, and refuse them. Then the party will rage in vain, and I expect a final success to our attempts to carry the treaty into effect. In this mode, the party must assail his character, powers, and doings: all our strength against part of theirs. The form of this debate will create surprise — that we refused to accept Madison's amendment, to except such papers as he might deem improper, and our going on to discuss the whole doctrine of the powers of each department. I think both proceedings right. An amendment, by hiding the cloven foot, would have made the motion worse.

Giles is said to have ready three resolutions:

1st. That the treaty is pernicious, &c., &c.

2d. That this House will *not* concur in measures to carry it into execution. (I since hear it is not so, but an assertion of the discretion of the House to grant or withhold.)

3d. That it will concur in measures to give effect to a proper treaty.

I like their violence. You and other discerning friends of order will note the wickedness, inconsistency, and sophistry

of these Catilines. Virginia is said to be growing tamer; and if the storm should not sink the federal ship immediately, a better crew may be looked for, even from Virginia. This is the opinion of the most respectable, and probably the leaders dread the same thing, for they put all at risk on this struggle.

I am obliged to hear as though I heard not, and to feel as though I was an oyster.

March 12.

No decision yet, and the debate will continue some days. It was the design of Giles to go into a rambling debate, exciting the passions against this and that article of the treaty. Instead of an address to passion, the debate takes the turn of argument, an accurate discussion of a proposition — its truth, not its consequences. Giles will try to get it on the journals,— That the House asserts its right to sanction, or refuse to sanction, treaties which include any of the legislative powers of Congress, after which he will let his common men drop off, and carry the treaty into effect. Others believe the utmost effort will be made to prevent its going into effect.

Yours.

TO GEORGE RICHARDS MINOT.

Philadelphia, April 2, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, —

. . . . . .

I feel no desire to convert Doctor Kilham, because not having ceased to view him as a man of worth and good sense, I would not wish to run the hazard of a new casting. I do not know, and, believing what I have suggested of his character, I do not much care, what his politics are. Such *antis* as he was will do no harm. Men of fair minds, and possibly of too much perspicacity in espying objections to systems, may raise their own apprehensions, but not mine. They are not the bearers of firebrands, and daggers. The present household of antifederalism would be too much

praised, to be compared with the few sensible and over-apprehensive men of principle, who dreaded the operation of our government at its outset.

Experience seems to have malice against theories. Friends and foes must confess the danger from the government, and the danger to it, appear in unsuspected places.

When clubs fail of deciding elections, mobs must be resorted to, for guiding the conduct of the chosen. When riotous meetings can prevent the ratification of a treaty, the power of negotiating will be virtually in the hands of the leaders of the sovereign people, as they very foolishly call a thousandth part of a nation. This very course has been taken, and the event is the problem yet unsolved.

The answer of the President respecting the treaty papers will be with you. The party seemed wild on its being read. The project of referring the message to a committee of the whole House, is for the declared purpose of replying to it; that is a manifesto or declaration of war against the other two branches. The serious aspect of the business needs no comment. My own faith is, the country will leave them, or more properly is not with them. Mr. Madison is deeply implicated by the appeal of the President to the proceedings of the General Convention, and most persons think him irrecoverably disgraced, as a man void of sincerity and fairness.

The appropriation of money to carry the treaty into effect will be vehemently contested, and it is hard to say how it will go. I think some will flinch. A statement is made to give you an idea of the votes.

	Yeas.	Nays.	Doubtful.	Absent.
N. H.	3	0	0	1
Mass.	10	3	0	1
Conn.	7	0	0	0
R. I.	2	0	0	0
Vt.	1	1	0	0
N. Y.	5	4	1	0
N. J.	5	0	0	0
Penn.	4	7	2	0
Del.	0	1	0	0
Md.	6	1	0	1
Vir.	0	19	0	0
Ken.	0	1	1	0
N. Car.	2	7	1	0
S. Car.	2	3	0	1
Geo.	0	2	0	0
	47	49	5	4

More are doubtful, and should one or two leaders desert the terrorists, they will drop off rapidly. Such an event is probable. My health is slowly, though I am persuaded perceptibly, improving. I am unfit for debate, and am not able to attend through a whole sitting. God bless you.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, April 18, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — I have just returned from riding. Mr. Giles is speaking in the House, and I have enjoyed your and Mrs. A.'s letters in the committee chamber.

. . . . . .

Here, we dance upon the edge of the pit, crying *ça ira;* it is but a little way to the bottom. No war. Reject the treaty. All depends on the constancy of the Senate, and on the alarms that the people will feel and send back to us. There will be no adjournment, if no treaty — no motion to the wheels of government. The mill will be stopped, if the *antis* refuse to grind this treaty grist. In short, it is what Genet threatened — an appeal to the public. Heaven knows what the court of appeals will do. At present, the *vox populi* seems to be *vox rationis.* This city is right. So is Baltimore. The Quakers are alarmed. Alarms are contagious. I do not despair, nor will I brag, because the issue is actually joined, so long ago croaked about in all my letters. I wish the event had disgraced my conjuring skill.

My best wishes for Mrs. D., Miss B., &c., and two ounces (all I have a right to frank) of kisses for Mary and John.

Yours, &c.

I am *bonâ fide* a better man than when you saw me at Dedham, or than I was at the date of my last.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER.

April 29.[1]

DEAR SIR, — Mrs. Ames will have too lively apprehensions for my safety, when she finds (as she will by the

[1] The day after his great speech on the British treaty. The speech was an open violation of the Doctor's orders, and perhaps of some domestic injunctions, which the sad condition of his health made to appear not unreasonable.

Gazettes) that I have been speaking in public. I would quiet them if possible, and am justly anxious to do it at this time, as her situation is critical. The verity of my accounts is a good deal suspected, and will probably be received as a drug artfully made up to suit her case.

I beg you address a letter to Colonel Thomas Dwight, and mention in it that I am alive, to your knowledge, and not the worse for having preached. J. Smith engages to tell my story to you in such a manner as to save your conscience from blame, or to furnish excuses, if they should be called for. Your goodness will excuse this call upon it, and command the thanks of your obliged friend.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, May 19, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — You are too modest in respect to your letters when you fancy they are, or ever can be, burdens. So far from it, they would make the political burden the lighter, if I bore any part of it. But I do not. I venture to say, and I do not know who will have a right to contradict me, that I am the most idle and useless man here. I am but indifferent even *fruges consumere*. I attend Congress daily, but crack jokes instead of problems, and think as little of the proceedings as the doorkeeper. The business of the world is not done by thinking, I confess, and on that ground alone my claim to preëminent inconsequence would be disputable. I have other grounds. I am often absent at a vote.

Our politics assume a pacific and insipid face. The war will soon begin again. Who shall be President and Vice, are questions that will put an end to the armed neutrality of parties. Mr. Adams will be our man, and Jefferson theirs. The second is yet on both sides somewhat doubtful.

If your place in the Senate should not be found to injure

your concerns, I shall be glad of your appointment to it. It will bring you near Dedham, and assist the good cause of virtue and order in the General Court. Faction will send its recruiting sergeants round to obtain recruits for Jefferson by beat of the Chronicle drum. The choice of electors will be attended to everywhere with eagle eyes.

We shall probably rise about the 27th. Rejoice when our mob has dispersed, and no windows broken.

A great rain is falling. I hope it is not too late for the Yankee grass.

. . . . . .

If the pamphlet, containing the speech of your friend and humble servant, can be procured in time for the mail, it shall be sent to you. If *you* think proper to make its last stage, or its place of rest and cobwebs, in your library, you will deposit it there, but not in *my* name. That would expose the vanity, which I cannot conquer, but can hide, except when I boast of my friends; and especially that I am

Yours.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, May 30, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — You are, I trust, now doing all the good you can in the Senate. To prevent evil is one of the most useful and necessary duties of that station. Messrs. Cabot and Strong,[1] we hear, will not serve after this session. To send bad men to succeed two so good, would be unpardonable, especially at this high pitch of Massachusetts good sense and federalism.

Congress will rise June 1st, as most of us expect. Rejoice when that event is ascertained. If we should finish and leave the world right side up, it will be happy. Do not ask what good we do: that is not a fair question, in these days of faction. The sky of politics seems clear for the pre-

[1] Members of the Senate.

sent, but the blue sky is seldom to be seen, for it rains almost without ceasing. If that should be denied, I fear the Dedham meadows would prove the fact. They cry *de profundis* for relief.

My return may be expected — I will not say when. I shall leave this city for the south on June 2d, unless Congress should linger in their seats. I reckon three weeks for the journey. I shall pass three or four days in New York, and by attention to riding on horseback after my return, and the prospect of some law business, I shall be little of a domestic man during the recess. This is a state of vagabondism which I rejoice to think will soon end.

I hope your household is in health. God bless you.

Yours.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.[1]

Philadelphia, July 30, 1796.

My Dear Friend, — I take up the pen and yet I find a want of the writing impulse. That is strange, as I write to you, yet so it is, and, therefore, expect a dull epistle.

On the 2d of August I shall leave this place, and be glad to leave it, as the air is of the hottest. You are now respiring the foggy coolness of the Thames, and wondering, as I certainly should, at the splendor of London. England at this instant exerts a force beyond that of Trajan or Antoninus. The magnanimity that sustains bad success and perseveres against events, is not strange in a ministry. But I am ready to pay some respect to a people who can do this. Sudden feelings seem to be as right as tardy wisdom; and even the latter would refuse peace on the terms of yielding to France her conquests. Peace on such terms would aggravate the fear and the danger, and paralyze the efforts which

[1] Mr. Gore was a member of the Commission on British Spoliations, provided for in the Jay treaty, and was at this time residing at London, in the execution of his duties.

would remove the cause, or at least counteract its immediate alarms. I am solicitous to know how the war will proceed, after such wonderful success of the French in Italy. The Emperor may now be at ease, as he has no more dominions in harm's way. So much for Europe.

As to the United States, I think John Adams will succeed our chief. Late events have aided the friends of order. What fatality is there on the measures of Great Britain to tease and wrong us, by the petty depredations of Bermuda? You know, and perhaps they do not, that this little pick-pocket system makes them more bitter enemies here than can well be conceived. Prejudice against them would be no great matter, especially if they court, or rather provoke it, provided it was no obstacle to good order, and the great interests of peace in the United States; but it is, as you know. Lord send us peace in our day, that the passions of Europe may not inflame the sense of America!

Our politics are now on a good footing. The people are calm, and reason has made herself understood. She speaks low, and is often hoarse, and of all speakers the most easily browbeaten; therefore, I calculate the calm of our affairs accordingly. For passion comes in our sky, like the thundergusts in clear weather, and catches the grain in the sheaf and the hay in the swarth: the air is the better immediately after. Since the treaty, we see nothing but blue sky.

You will be missed in October at the election. I shall speak very plainly, and the more so, as I shall have no votes to expect or wish. William Eustis, I fear, is quite wrong. H. G. Otis will be my successor, if right men prevail. Swanwick will be ousted here. Muhlenburg also, if a good competitor can be fixed on. Galletin and Findlay will be opposed with vigor. Senator Ross is the Ajax of the western country. Our W. Lyman is in disgrace in Hampshire. These are good omens. It is, however, common to see more blossoms than apples.

I will contend the point with no man, woman, or child, that Philadelphia is a very hot place, for at this instant I am dissolving.

It was said by our good President, to a person who spoke to him of England, that we are strong in that country;

alluding to a friend of mine, King, and Pinckney. That will help to reconcile me to the privations I am to bear, beyond any one of your acquaintance, in consequence of your absence. My return to private life, and my bad health, will demonstrate this conclusion. While I assure you that I anticipate your letters with pleasure, I think it just to concede, that my claim shall be restrained to such communications only as you may find it quite convenient to make. I will soon write again. Yesterday I gave a letter to a Mrs. Carrington, addressed to the care of Dickason & Co. This will go to the letter-bag of the same vessel. God bless you.

Yours.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, August 22, 1796.

My Dear Friend, — If I am your debtor for the use of your horse, I am your accuser for having so cruelly calumniated him. Mars himself would not have done better in the harness; a West Springfielder would not have gone with a federal weight hitched behind him more willingly. Oats enough, and a new lash to the whip, really inspired him, much to the surprise of my young friend Joseph.

With regard to the favor, I shall only say, it is (and excuse me if I avow it has ever been) your disposition to lay heavy loads on your friends, and you will not permit yourself to touch them with one of your fingers. I thirst for revenge, and I will retaliate in a vindictive way on the first occasion that presents; so take care of yourself.

We are here almost speechless, crying water, water; for our gardens are as dry as ashes. If I can buy a sulky, I contemplate a trip of three or four weeks, after the fourth week in September.

The weather is now very hot, and clients are coming in. They and I sweat under the weight (and more with the length) of their tragical stories. Whether anybody will be hanged this term, I know not; but if justice is done, some

persons will have to pay forty shillings. I shall, no doubt, be weary with the business of the week, but I feel as if I could bear the fatigue of it. I shall be glad, however, when it is over.

The drum of politics never beats here. When they go wrong, our folks appear as a militia. But I trust right impressions are made, or may be made, against election day.

With my very best regards to Mrs. D. and Miss B.

I am your friend.

TO JEREMIAH SMITH.

Dedham, September 4, 1796.

My Dear Smith, — I promised to write to you on my return, and therefore I must; for a promise, you know, like a treaty, is binding. To one who is, at least semiannually, a lover, I might urge my excuse, that between friends (as between lovers) a promise is but wind. I renounce such quibbles, and will do my duty; and because it is my duty, I fear (and indeed I feel) that I shall do it as dully as you might expect, when I make writing an affair of conscience.

I saw Virginia, and it is not in a state to brag of; the land is good, but the inhabitants scattered, and as bad farmers as politicians. As to the latter, I must do them justice; for *una voce*, all men in whole clothes said, and prove, *more majorum*, that their representatives did not speak their language; that they did love the President, the Constitution, and the Union; that they would support these, obey the laws, and if they could, turn out their members at the next election. A federal party is certainly rising up there, and though (as a party) it is the weaker, the citizens are now more impressible by them than by the Jacobins. I hope, and my most considerate informants were absolutely certain, that some changes would be made in the next Congress, by sending real feds — four, at least, of the nineteen. Amen.

Brent, Cabell, Heath, are among those who are marked

for dead men at the next election battle. Jefferson will not have *all* the votes in Virginia for President. John Adams, and Thomas Pinckney will be supported by the feds in Maryland and Pennsylvania; and I hope the spirit of the Yankees will not be wanting on an occasion that so deeply concerns the *salus Reipub.*

Here the sea of politics, lately so stormy, is as still as a mill-pond. Another storm will be necessary before long to keep it sweet.

Having thus attended to the public, I come, last of all, to myself. We patriots have made this a habit. . . . . I am as strong and healthy as a man (no, that is not true) as a woman. Put a woman to hoe corn, or chop wood, and you have a just idea of my forces. I can ride better than at Philadelphia, fast longer, have fewer faint, low turns, sleep better, &c., but my appetite is yet puny; I soon tire with standing, or walking, or sitting up after nine. Like a grass-fed horse, my skin is glossy, and I carry my head up, but put me to work and I soon flinch. Yet I have gained seven pounds of flesh; proud flesh, your witty malice will say, because it grew on me, and in Virginia.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Dedham, October 5, 1796.

My Dear Friend, — Your favors, of the 26th July and 2d August, came to my hands on the evening of the 3d, when the storm, that we may call the equinoctial, was whistling through my keyhole. The letters cheered us, in spite of the gloom of a very terrible tempest.[1] I am happy to hear of our friend King's safe arrival. As he is, beyond

[1] The following is from Governor Gore's letter, referred to in the text: —

London, 26 July, 1796.

My Dear Friend, — I received your favor of 31st May with great pleasure; it was the first letter I had seen from any of my American friends; and you, who have so feeling a heart, will know how much I enjoyed from reading the sentiments of affection and esteem which it contained. Before

question, an abler man than any of the *corps diplomatique* in the United States, I anticipate the impression he will make in London, as raising the American character. Probably we think too highly of the abilities of their ministry,

this reaches you, the news of our safe arrival will have been in Boston, and, I flatter myself, will have afforded you and some other friends satisfaction. King and his family are now added to our society; they arrived, in health, on Saturday evening. He visits Lord Grenville to-day, his majesty to-morrow, the queen the next day, and then is ready to do the business of his mission, and Mr. Pinckney to relinquish his. This latter gentleman intends to embark in September for South Carolina. I really esteem him as an amiable, honorable man, and cannot but think that, in the neighborhood of wise and firm men, he would be inclined to see the weakness and nonsense of some ideas that are very prevalent among the madmen of Europe and America. If the fates should place him in the Vice-President's chair, I should acquiesce in their decrees. As Cabot, Ellsworth, King, and Strong are out, and John Adams is, we hope, to be President, I pray we may have no more such nice and important questions as have agitated that board ever since its existence; — for, although I do not mean to derogate from the powers and integrity of those who are to supply their places, I should feel great anxiety at seeing the points discussed which have been argued there, and afterwards brought to the chair for a decision.

Sedgwick and Goodhue, I trust, will accept the call of their country, and I really rejoice for them and the public; but where, my friend, is to be found the leader of this band?

When you are absent, who is to play your part in the House, and guide in the tempestuous element which will ever reign in a place where so many and such various views direct the members? I look on the Executive, too, with more than distrust of its popularity. The pitiful avarice, falsely called economy, together with the abuse which good men see so plentifully heaped upon the public servants, without emotion, has driven, and will drive, from that part of our government, all that is able and virtuous. The wicked and weak, who affect to serve the public out of pure, disinterested love for the people, may then riot, unopposed, on the spoils which faction has created, or rather prepared, for their hands.

. . . . . .

I received, from Philadelphia, your speeches, and know that they are in the hands of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Dundas, and Lord Grenville. I will, when I obtain another, send it to E. B. It is universally admired; it does honor to our country, and is read with great avidity by men of genius and taste.

You would really be surprised to hear the strange questions that are frequently put to Americans on the subject of our country, its customs, and languages. We suppose that what concerns our nation is pretty well understood by all the reading and inquisitive men of this; but this is a mistake. I have been asked, by a very sensible man, who appeared acquainted with our politics, as relating to this country, what language we talked in America; and when I answered, the English, he wished to know if we talked it so generally as that our laws were printed in that. He told me he supposed we were a race of men composed of so many different nations, that we had a language as various as the different nations from which his imagination considered us made up, or a sort of motley language, like our own, as he supposed, mongrel race.

. . . . . .

and too meanly of the principles of their government. If the prudence of their conduct towards the United States should be the test of the former, we should rate them very low. At this time of day, when experience has shown how they ought *not* to have acted, and when their actual situation threatens to make error fate, I did hope they would adopt wise rules of action, and carry them further, and adhere to them the more steadily, in proportion to the little repentance, and the greater apprehension, which I have supposed even their arrogance had felt for their former deviations. But your hints of their judicial delays, and of the unmanageableness of their ministry, renew my fears. If they should play a little, mean, game at last, they would do us infinite mischief. They would Frenchify and democratize us, ten times the worse for the long delay of the crisis. Surely they would not like to see us turn mob at last; and you know that the ultimate failure, or even the material disappointment, of the hopes entertained here from the treaty, would bring up giant anarchy again, like Antæus from the ground, the stronger for his fall. Is it impossible to make them see, and, which is ten times better, to make them feel and fear, this tendency? I will not proceed to write all that you and I already think on this subject; it would be a folio. I will only add, that I fear victory will make the fury of the French again contagious. Peace, under present circumstances, would expose Great Britain to dangers of unknown shapes and sizes. The revolutionary torrent was thought to have spent itself, and to be spreading into a still lake. On the contrary, it seems to be wearing itself a channel, and to be running with as much force, and nearly as much froth, as ever. Whether the mountain of Great Britain will stand strong, is a curious problem, that I am very willing, if it please God, to live to see solved. If it should be undermined and sink, there will not be a fruitful plain, the fabled plain of equality, in its stead, but a lake, to send up hotter and more pestiferous steams than that of Asphaltites. The principles of real order will be everywhere in disgrace and persecution. Our children must then pass through the fire to Moloch; suffer for liberty, and not have it at last. The French ought to see that to run mad,

is not the way to understand it; — and to enjoy it, they have committed the practice of the principles of humanity to the hangman and his former customers. If the Emperor should hold out, and resolve on another campaign, will not the funds of the French fail at last? Will shoe-buckles at home, and church plate in Italy, furnish pay and plunder to a million soldiers abroad and two millions of committee-men at home? They are living, and not very frugally, on the old stock. Miracles are no more; and one would not look for their renewal in favor of the French saints. It is not within probability that they will find the means of another campaign by conquest and plunder, for they have gone the length of their chain; nor that they could squeeze more from their own subjects, without reviving the flames of civil war. But we hear that Spain is going to put on armor, and take the enviable chance of losing ships, colonies, and independence, in a war that France forces her into, and which cannot help her interests by any of its vicissitudes. Such would have been our lot, had Genet prevailed here, or Mr. M. at Paris. B. H. and J. S., the two Dorchester patriots, formerly from Paris, speak very highly of Mr. M. They affect to be friends of order. But they will not do much mischief, as matters now are.

I will not dilate on our affairs; in truth, there is not much to write about. All is calm at present; and because it is calm, we ought to expect a storm; for, in such times, the feds go to sleep in full faith that all danger is over. I fear this is the case in respect to my successor. I shall try to rouse a better spirit. Eustis is very equivocal, and, I agree with you, should be made to declare himself, and take his side. If Jefferson should be our chief, he will be a decided Jacobin. J. C. Jones will, no doubt, refuse; and H. G. Otis will, I think, be our man. His talents will distinguish him, and I hope he will be careful to wait patiently in Congress till they do; but he is ardent and ambitious. I reserve myself to croak on the state of the nation, when the choice of our first and second men becomes more calculable.

I have read your two letters with equal attention and pleasure; but, instead of paying you for each article with a

comment or reply, I have rambled out into infinite space, like a comet. Do not imagine, however, that my vanity loses one word of your flattering notice of my treaty speech. As to my absence from the House, the loss will be nothing as to leading. I never had any talent in *that* way, and I have not been the dupe of such a false belief. Few men are fit for it. Ellsworth, Hamilton, King, and perhaps John Marshall, would lead well, especially Ellsworth,

. . . . quo non præstantior alter
Ære ciere viros, Martemque accendere cantu.

His want of a certain fire that H. and K. have, would make him the fitter as *dux gregis*. The House will be like sheep without a shepherd. I never was more than shepherd's dog; and my friends have been too civil sometimes, in their praise of my barking, when the thieves and the wolves were coming. My vanity (God knows I have enough) is laying no traps for an answer of praise; but I know, and you know, that if sometimes I can talk with some effect, I am good for nothing else. I shall do ill as a lawyer, and I am unfit for any public employment. The talent of exaggeration is a poor claim to any station that requires moderation of mind, and accuracy, and patience of observation. I wish, therefore, I do really wish, to be obscure at home, where my wife and children, &c., will think of me as I wish. The world would find me out, if I was placed in any new post. This is not mock modesty; far enough from it, or any modesty. Over and above all other considerations, my ties to this life are not stronger than cobweb. My health is not equal to any exertion. It is possible I may mend, yet I believe it is a fixed debility, a kind of premature old age; and as I am a new light in politics, the fervors of the next two years, especially if our politics should go wrong, would destroy me. You and my other friends will admit that this is probable.

I will attend to your query respecting the interpretation of the words of the treaty, "the ordinary course of justice," &c. I shall take the first occasion to ask the opinions of better casuists than I can pretend to be. Every thing that has the most remote connection with your fame and happiness, will have its importance in my eyes. Yours, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, October 25, 1796.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

I left positive directions with a friend, yesterday, to cause my declining a place on the list of candidates for Congress to be announced in the Centinel. It has been delayed too long, and that has not been my fault. H. G. Otis will be our man; Eustis or J. Bowdoin for the *antis*. Governor Adams will, it is said, offer as an elector. This evinces a design to quit the chair, at least in May next; for, after the mischief he would do as an elector, is it possible that Massachusetts would reëlect him?

The prospect of choosing John Adams is thought to be very good. Thomas Pinckney will be proposed as Vice, and votes will be sought for John Adams in the South, on the expectation that the eastern States will vote fairly for him and Pinckney. Swanwick and Blair McClenachan are chosen — the latter for the county of Philadelphia: a thick-headed Irishman. *Vox populi* is, you know, always *vox sapientiæ*. The successes of France do not appear to me greatly to bewitch our citizens. The gloss of novelty is off, and our gallicism appears shabby to the men of sense. Their opinion finally guides that of the public. I am sorry to see its progress so very slow. If reverses of fortune should happen to the French, which are not impossible, our cure would be hastened.

I am building stone wall, which will not cost less than a guinea a rod. Is not this a good business, well followed? My house is moated round in dirt, like an entrenched camp. I hurry my improvements, as I am soon to pluck up stakes for Congress. When my apprenticeship is out in March, will master give me a new suit of clothes and an hundred pounds, old tenor? I think not, but I hope my customers will.

With my best regards to you and yours, I am

Yours, truly.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, December 3, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — Our correspondence has been longer interrupted than either could wish. Your last was dated 7th September, and my last on or near the 7th November. All that time I was vexed with our Dedham *antis*, for voting as they did for Governor A. and J. B. Yet H. G. Otis is chosen very handsomely, and will sustain the cause of order and his own fame in Congress. . . . . The House will be better; the Senate cannot be, as to voting, at least as to effective voting. The loss, in talents, &c., &c., is to be lamented. We have not another Rufus King to put there.

As to President, never was there a more embarrassing state of things. A statement of the votes is given thus: North of Delaware, Adams, 58; a Mr. Coleman, of Pennsylvania, is of this State's number, 1. But a Mr. A. J. Dallas, it is said, will oust him, by causing Governor Mifflin to certify anew. Greene County votes would exclude Coleman, and they have come in since the Governor's certificate or proclamation. Delaware, 3; Maryland, 6, (others insist 7 — say 6,) = 9. Virginia, 2. (A Mr. Eyre, of the Eastern Shore, and Colonel Powell say positively there will be 4 *against* Jefferson,) 2 = 70 — a majority of 138. North Carolina, it is hoped, will give one, who declared he would, if chosen, vote for Adams, and this in a newspaper. Thus, you see, it is very close. Accident, whim, intrigue, not to say corruption, may change or prevent a vote or two. Perhaps some may be illegal, and excluded. What a question this last would be, if made when the two houses convened! How could it be debated or adjusted? *a la Pologne?* You will see the resolve of Massachusetts to empower the electors to fill up their own vacancies, if any should be. A strange resolve. . . . . Who can foresee the issue of this momentous election? Perhaps the Jeffs, foreseeing a defeat, may vote for Mr. Pinckney, in which case he might come in by two thirds of all the votes. But they expect

success, and therefore will not throw away their votes. Yet Mr. P. may have more than Adams; and of the three chances, his may be thought the most hopeful. That would be a subject of incalculable consequences. On the one hand, he is a good man; on the other, even a good President, thus made by luck or sheer dexterity of play, would stand badly with parties and with the country. It would wear an ill aspect in Europe, as well as here. We shall soon know the decree of destiny; and it will reach London by the gazettes.

While our government is thus on the *transmigration*, (excuse the word) and exposed to some foreseen and more unforeseen contingencies, Adet[1] times his electioneering insolence. Some among us are so wicked as to justify the French; and others so mean, so unspeakably mean, as to say we must choose a President that will conciliate that nation. Some of the Quakers have supported the Jeff ticket on that plea. I think the Yankee spirit higher and better: otherwise, I should wish to import a cargo of emancipated Dutchmen, to be the fathers of the next generation. I trust the feelings of our countrymen will repel this more than Genet outrage on an independent government. But the business is supposed to depend on the issue of the campaign. France, if victorious, will not fail to interdict our trade with Great Britain; if beaten, she will receive explanations from General Pinckney. The world is deeply interested to have her exorbitant power curtailed, and I really hope our ox-eating fools begin to see it. To celebrate French victories may be right for Jacobins; but *we* should

[1] Adet, the French minister, did not content himself with corresponding with the Secretary of State, according to old diplomatic usage, but occasionally appealed to the people, by publishing in the Aurora (the leading Democratic paper) a duplicate of his official communications to the Department. He had recently published in that manner a full and elaborate exposition of the complaints of France against the American government, — the principal grievance, of course, being the British treaty. This remarkable and declamatory document announced, among other things, that, although France was terrible in her resentment, she was magnanimous; and if Americans would but let their government return to itself, they would still find in Frenchmen faithful friends and generous allies. This appeal was at the eve of a very doubtful election, in which the danger of a rupture with France was relied upon, by the Democratic party, as a reason for a change of administration.

cease to celebrate the Fourth of July. The publication is so recent, we cannot be sure how it is received. If Adams should be President, and Jefferson should accept the Vice-Presidency, as many swear he certainly will, if elected, party will have a head, responsible for nothing, yet deranging and undermining every thing, and France would have a new magazine of disorganizing influence. If Jefferson should be President, he would aid the French design (formerly baffled) of excluding the English trade, and would colonize the United States in effect. I own I am ready to croak when I observe the gathering of the vapors in our horizon. Yet it is not every cloud that brings rain. On Monday, the fifth, Congress is to meet. A quiet session is predicted. This is probable enough, but many circumstances may occur to raise a storm. A contested vote for President, when the two houses meet to count the votes, would realize, in an instant, our worst forebodings. The French attacks may grow more serious, and oblige parties to array themselves. But I hope Moreau is disposed of. He was hemmed in by the Austrians, and was thought, at our last dates of intelligence, to be cut off. The ruin of his army would change the outrageous conduct of the French towards the United States. Jourdan is entirely defeated, and his army dispersed, as we hear, although new troops are sent to cover him at Dusseldorf. Pray give me the military news.

I left Dedham fourteen days ago, in a hack, and proceeded in it to New York. There I took an extra stage, so that my journey was easy, and although it was very cold weather, I performed it almost as well as ever. My health is much improved. I am yet tender, but I am not allowed to call myself an invalid. By care and exercise, I really hope to be *in statu quo ante* 1795.

Yours, and Mrs. G.'s.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 8, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — My journey was easy and salutary, and my friends unite, at first sight, in pronouncing that I have now the face of perfect health. I am, I hope, becoming fit for application to business, but it will require a considerable further period of relaxation before I shall resume my former engagements, or believe that I may do it with impunity.

Who is to be President is yet the puzzle. If Mr. Pinckney has the eastern votes, or two thirds of them, many believe he will be President. Jefferson, I hope and trust, has the worst chance of the three. His being Vice would be a formidable evil, if his pride would let him take it.

Little is yet done or said in Congress, and the session we hope will be free from the accustomed tempests. W. Lyman, I hope, will stay at home in future, and Dearborn; then Skinner would be more likely to go straight.

Yours, affectionately.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, December 10, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — Yours of 5th December informs that all is well at Springfield, which is news sufficient to make a letter very welcome. I am very well, and few will suffer me to say a word about my old claims as an invalid. Thus my privileges are disputed, but the family I am with indulge all my pretensions. I am bound to say that I receive the kindest attentions, and with these I hope I shall return in trim to earn half a dollar by my work. I resolve to work here but little as a legislator. I am on a speech-answering committee at present, which imposes all the task on me; and as there is an allusion to the French, and a propriety in an

eulogium on the President, it is no sinecure. We shall probably bring a debate on our heads to get it through the House. After this I decline committees.[1]

[1] The debate came, as was anticipated, and proved to be somewhat extraordinary.

After a number of verbal alterations had been proposed, Mr. Giles, of Virginia, moved to strike out from the address reported by the committee all the clauses from the sixth inclusive, and to recommit. He said that he did not object to every sentiment expressed in the portions of the report which he moved to strike out. He had no objection that the address should be complimentary, but wished it to be so within the bounds of moderation and justice. He would state the parts which he conceived objectionable. He objected to the sixth paragraph because he conceived it unnatural and unbecoming to exult at our prosperity, by putting it pointedly in comparison with the calamities of Europe. It was not necessary to tell persons, unfortunately involved in a calamity, that we were so much happier than they. This had no relation with the business of the House.

If he stood alone in the opinion, yet he would declare that he was not convinced that the administration of the government, these six years past, had been wise and firm. Indeed he had opposed every measure of theirs respecting our foreign relations, and unless he could be convinced that he had been wrong in that opposition, he could not be made to feel the existence of that wisdom. If the measures of that administration with respect to foreign powers had been wise, we should not have been brought to the present crisis. A want of wisdom and firmness had conducted the affairs of the nation to a crisis which threatened greater calamities than any that had before occurred.

If the report had been so framed as to express a sense of the patriotism, virtue, and uprightness of the President, it might have obtained the unanimous vote of the House, but it was not to be expected that many of the members should so far lose sight of self-respect as to condemn, by one vote, the whole course of their own political conduct. If a view was to be taken, indeed, of our internal situation, it would be seen that circumstances exist not usually attendant on a state of prosperity. Public and private credit is shaken, arising in a great degree from the fiscal operations of administration.

Another sentiment in the report he could not agree to. He did not regret the President's retiring from office. He hoped he would retire, and enjoy the happiness that awaited him in retirement. He believed it would more conduce to that happiness, that he should retire, than that he should remain in office. He believed the government of the United States founded on the broad basis of the people; that they were competent to their own government; and the remaining of no man in office was necessary to the success of that government. The people would be truly in a calamitous situation, if one man were essential to the existence of their government. He was convinced that the United States possessed a thousand citizens capable of filling the Presidential chair, and he would trust to the discernment of the people for a proper choice. Though the voice of all America should declare the President's retirement a calamity, he could not join in the declaration, because he did not conceive it a misfortune. He hoped the President would be happy in his retirement, and he hoped he would retire.

He reverted again to that part of the report which declared the administration to have been wise and firm in its measures. He had always disapproved, he repeated, of the measures of that administration with respect to foreign relations, and many members of the House had, also. He was therefore surprised that gentlemen would now come forward and wish him, in one breath, to disavow all his former opinions, without being previously convinced of having

One elector was sick and did not vote in Delaware. A loss to Adams. In Pennsylvania, report from Harrisburg says, three will vote for Adams; and two, three, or four are expected in North Carolina. Still, if the votes of the Eastern States are for Pinckney, he will be the man. Yours, &c.

been in an error. For his own part, he conceived there was more cause than ever for adhering to his old opinions. The course of events had pointed out their propriety, and if he was not much mistaken, a crisis was at hand, which would confirm them. He wished that while gentlemen are willing to compliment the President, they would pay some respect to the feelings of others.

After some further objection to the declaration as to Americans being the freest and most enlightened of nations, he adverted to the sentiment expressed in the same clause, "that adulation would tarnish the lustre," &c., and observed that those words, introduced in a parenthesis, appeared to have forced themselves upon the committee, as in fact self-condemning what had been written before in exalted praise of the President.

He concluded by a few remarks on the last clause of the reported address, which expressed a wish that the President's successors may keep him in view, as an example worthy of imitation. It would be time enough, he hoped, to speak of his successor when he should arrive. His successor, he did not doubt, when he did come into office, would exert his best judgment and ability for the good of the United States, and would pursue the course without any example. The objectionable parts of the report he considered so interwoven with the rest, that he hoped his motion to strike out and recommit would prevail.

In the course of the debate, Mr. Nicholas objected to the address as too strong to be agreed to. Mr. Rutherford lamented that a mistaken zeal in behalf of the President had led to the introduction of an address which could not command unanimous concurrence. Nobody could vote for this address who doubted the propriety of the course of our government towards France.

Mr. Livingston hoped that the answer would have been so drawn as to avoid this debate. And as to the declaration concerning the "tranquil prosperity" of the country, the present circumstances do not warrant it. He could not assent to it without mocking the distresses of his constituents.

Mr. Giles's motion was then negatived.

Mr. Livingston then moved to strike out the words, "your wise, firm and patriotic administration," and substitute, "your wisdom, firmness, and patriotism." Mr. Giles, in advocating this amendment, remarked that the British Treaty was a ruinous measure, and this ere long would be the opinion of America. The British Treaty and the emission of transferable paper had been particularly opposed. He believed that the President possessed talents, virtue and wisdom; but that these qualities had not been so eminently displayed in the government as in other acts of his life.

After considerable debate, in which it appeared that some of the Democratic members could not go so far as to advocate it, this amendment was cut off by the previous question.

Mr. Blount then moved to strike out the last sentence of the address, "for your country's sake," &c., which motion was rejected by a vote of fifty-four against twenty-four. The same gentleman then, in order, as he said, that posterity might see that he did not consent to the address, called for the yeas and nays. The address was then adopted, the twelve following being the only members who voted in the negative, viz. Messrs. Blount, Coles, Giles, Greenup, Holland, Andrew Jackson, Livingston, Locke, William Lyman, Maclay, Macon, and Venable.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, December 17, 1796.

DEAR FRIEND, — It is now taken for certain that Mr. A. will be President, as he has sixty-seven votes, and Vermont will give him four more, South Carolina perhaps two or three. But though Jefferson cannot be President, he may be Vice, which would be disastrous. In a Senate that will bring him into no scrapes, as he will have no casting votes to give, responsible for no measures, acting in none that are public, he may go on affecting zeal for the people; combining the *antis*, and standing at their head, he will balance the power of the chief magistrate by his own. Two Presidents, like two suns in the meridian, would meet and jostle for four years, and then Vice would be first. Can we get along with so much less than the natural, not to say the present, state of the executive strength, and so much more than the ordinary power and combination of party? Mr. Pinckney may yet come in Vice, and I wish it, for the reasons alluded to above.

The gazettes will keep you informed of the state of the election.

Yesterday we presented the answer of the House to the Speech. The echo of the paragraph respecting a foreign nation was drafted as inoffensively as it could be, to avoid party points, and to evince our support of the President. Yet Giles, Parker, and others opposed it with vehemence. Their speeches went beyond the present state of popular feeling, and in the end we beat them. Their defeat will help to sink that exotic folly faster than it was going before, as very plain language was used in respect to foreign influence, &c., &c. Instead of blame on our government for having an affray to manage, it was our own base Americans at Paris, and a base party here, who fomented, encouraged, and now openly abetted, the injury and the insult. This brought out explanations, vindications, &c., that they did love their own country the best, and that they would fight even their beloved France, if necessary. Such sentiments will

certainly promote the cure of our contagious prejudices, and our gazettes already manifest it.

I had intended to write to you at great length. But riding out daily, and very frivolous reasons, have obstructed my design. I will resume it very soon. I pray you write often. Wishing you and Mrs. G. health and happiness, I am, Yours, &c.

I used to say, that if I had a friend in London I would beg his attention to buy for me a small set of second-hand books, which I understand could be had, of even an elegant kind, and at half price. Yet I am a little shy of pursuing this intention, lest you should be more zealous in the business than I would have you, as you are too importantly occupied, and, I may add, too much an American Commissioner, to buy second-hand books.

I propose a compromise therefore: If, through Mr. S. Cabot, I could procure such as I want, within any time that would admit of its being done without trouble, I would wish to have bought Robertson's History of Scotland, Charles V., and America; Hume's History of England, Pope's Iliad and Odyssey. Should you think the thing feasible without much of your attention, I would form a list with some care. I should be satisfied with decent bindings. . . . . .

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Philadelphia, January 5, 1797.

DEAR FRIEND, —

. . . . . .

I know little of Congress affairs. Much is not done or attempted, and I perceive (*inter nos*) the temper and objects of the members are marked with want of due reflection and concert, and indicate the proneness to anarchy, and the self-sufficient imbecility of all popular bodies, and especially of such as affect to engross all the active and efficient powers of

the other branches to themselves, as our folks do. A House that will play President, as we did last spring, Secretary of the Treasury, as we ever do, &c., &c., will play mob at last. Unless it is omnipotent, the members will not believe it has the means of self-defence. I could write a book, without rising from my chair, on the bad tendency of this disposition, and the actual progress we have made in it. However, you call me a croaker. I croak on, believing you will join me at last. Mr. Jefferson is said to have written to his friends here, not to oppose him, in a choice by States, if it should come to that, against John Adams, as he (A.) ought to be the President. Such hypocrisy may dupe very great fools, but it should alarm all other persons, as it shows a deep design, which neither shame nor principle will obstruct, to cajole and deceive the public, and (*inter nos*) even J. A.; in which I hope he, though an arch deceiver, will fail. His Vice-Presidency is a most formidable danger. This I say as a conjurer. Kiss all the children, yours and mine, on behalf of your friend.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Philadelphia, January 27, 1797.

My Dear Friend, — Although I have not much to add to my late letters, I will not lose the opportunity of writing again by the Favorite. There is policy in multiplying my letters. It will procure the more in reply from you.

The vote for a direct tax passed the House, forty-nine to thirty-nine. I voted with the latter. A committee is preparing a bill. Revenue is necessary, and that on trade is precarious. A resort to the land will be made soon or late. With these opinions, you will wonder at my vote. But in my judgment three things ought to concur before we venture on a land tax: The improvement of our internal taxes, systematizing and enforcing the collections; now Kentucky pays

nothing, and the backwoodsmen generally very little. Even the carriage and license taxes are badly collected in New England. The details of these should be perfected. I also wish first to see an extension of our indirect taxes to licenses for taverns, stamps, an higher duty on salt, on bohea tea, and brown sugar. The aversion to a land tax affords the means of effecting both these important objects of fiscal improvement, at least one would hope so, provided a proper union of the federal members was formed. Thirdly, and to conclude, I think the public mind should be prepared for a land tax before it is imposed, which it is not. I could wish the necessity of a tax might be admitted, in and out of Congress; that every effort be made to get the needful without touching the land; but the deficiency must be had at the next session by a land tax; and to that end that the *mode* of taxing should be now passed into a law, and the vote for a sum to be levied to be delayed till the next session. In this manner the public would be made to see that the necessity was real, and the effort to avoid a tax on land sincere. A levy of the deficiency would be (say $500,000) so light as to disappoint their fears, and cure their prejudices. The abrupt assessment of near a million and a half would operate very differently, as you will not doubt.

It is no easy matter to combine the anarchical opinions, even of the good men, in a popular body. We are a mere militia. There is no leader, no *point de ralliément.* The motion-makers start up with projects of ill-considered taxes, and, by presenting many and improper subjects, the alarm to popular feelings is rashly augmented. Whether we shall be able, in the event, to do any better is beyond my powers of conjecture. I shall preach to our friends to concert their plan, and to be complying to one another, for the common good. The session is wearing away, and I fear no revenue will be obtained. I am not robust enough to bear the labor of close application in the House, and thus I throw off my share of blame.

A committee reported on V.'s election, censuring the petition against him as malevolent. This part was erased, and another substituted, that V. had acted honorably in the election, which was carried, though it is not true. Brown

ought to have made some effort to sustain his charges, for the sake of the public opinion.

General Shepard is probably chosen, *vice* W. Lyman. I hear that the Georgia business strains the purses and credit of many in Boston, and is likely to prove a ruinous thing. There will be great distress everywhere among the moneyed men, as spoliations, speculations, luxury in living, and the course of trade, all lead to it. I might say over trading.

We are more than ever impatient to hear European news, as we all believe that events will augment or diminish the spoil committed on our commerce, according to their nature. W. Paine will keep you informed of what passes in Boston, &c. God bless you and your Commission.

Yours.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER.

Dedham, June 24, 1797.

Dear Sir, — I am the more thankful to you for your kind remembrance of me, manifested by your repeated letters, as it could be only from your benevolence that so useless a creature or thing, as I am, still attracts your attention. I rise rather early, put on my Germantown stockings, though it is June, ride a few miles, return very weary, lie down to recruit, take a biscuit and a glass of wine when I can no longer endure the lowness I am subject to, walk a little in the garden, read as much as I can, eat as much as I dare at dinner, ride again towards evening, and at nine o'clock go to roost. This is my life, and what matter is it whether I know how the world goes, or that Congress is as feeble and inefficient as I am?

My life is of no more use to the world, my family except, than the moss to the trees in your orchard: it sucks out a very little of the sap, and that sustains a stinted and barren vegetation. I bar all compliment in reply, and insist that ten such valetudinarians are not worth one cabbage plant.

We are cabbage stumps, and take up the room of better things. I will not urge this argument so far as to insist that all such folks as I am should be knocked on the head, although I could answer the objections and cavils of all excepting the concerned. My design in being thus particular is not to establish my claim to martyrdom, which I am content for the present to waive, but to help you to judge how I vegetate, and to enable you to answer the inquiries that some may still think fit to make about me. Whether I am to be worthy '*fruges consumere*,' by doing any thing to obtain them, is a problem too deep for me to solve at present. My own opinion has changed repeatedly, since I left Congress, in respect to the actual degree of my health, and the prospect of its being better or worse.

I leave it to you wise men to save the nation. Some of you must watch and pray, and others must fight, if need be. I should not have thought the lot would have fallen upon Thatcher to defend his principles by the sword.[1] And what is not the least remarkable, he got into the scrape by expressing his aversion to any thing French. He is a worthy fellow. May he long escape wounds and sickness, and enjoy as much glory as he thirsts for, without bleeding to get it. Does not J. Smith remark the advantage of a wife? She is an excuse on a challenge. God preserve you from gunpowder, &c. Yours.

TO HON. TIMOTHY PICKERING.[2]

Dedham, October 4, 1797.

DEAR SIR, — My engagements in a law court have not permitted me to thank you sooner, for the entertainment your

[1] Mr. Thatcher, a member from Massachusetts, (afterwards Judge of the Supreme Court,) was challenged by a Mr. Blount, for words spoken in debate. He declined the challenge in terms that rather turned the laugh against the challenger.

[2] Mr. Pickering was at this time Secretary of State.

printed answer to the little Don[1] has afforded. You have not left a whole bone in his skin. If his nation were not in question, I should say he was beaten too much, beaten after he was down, and every bystander would pity him. But as Spain once had power, and is still *magni nominis umbra*, with as much pride as if the substance had *not* departed, the spirit and vigor of the answer will have its effect in Europe. There they all tremble at France, and Spain too, because the terrible Republic says, Love me, love my dog. For my part, I love neither; and I rejoice to see the country acquiring, very fast, that self-respect which, with such an increment of power and resources as every year gives to the United States, will soon extort from foreign states the proper diplomatic sentiments and behavior. We have suffered strange impertinences from these privileged gentry. Mortified and provoked as I have been, on the successive occasions, I think it clear that the outrages upon our national dignity have raised the spirit and patriotism of the citizens. I find, everywhere, deposits of facts and opinions are culled from your reply to Adet (letter to Mr. Pinckney.) Many are disinfected, who were given over as incurable. If France should have another volcanic eruption, as many expect she will, her partisans here will grow modest. If the sword should preserve their tranquillity, my fears are that they will change their policy from force to hypocrisy, and hug us worse than they have robbed us. I am not sure that the old cant, with a change of conduct, would not make new troubles for the government by giving a new influence to the French partisans, its enemies. That influence is, however, so much weakened, I will hope it cannot be again near as mischievous as formerly.

Accept my best wishes for your own and your family's health, at the time of contagion and alarm.

I am, dear sir, yours sincerely.

[1] The Spanish minister, Irujo. His collisions with our government were somewhat frequent.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER.

Dedham, February 18, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — Craik's speech is extensively read and much admired. It puts arguments into the mouths of those who wanted them, and corrects many errors in regard to the character and views of the Demos. I am impatient to know the issue. When will the House vote the Senate useless, and the President dangerous? I give full credit to many who say they intend no such thing. The work of mischief never stops, because the instinct that executes it is blind. The fear of the Executive power is still as lively as if the President were a king. The fear of Church establishments is nearly as strong among the same set. They do not see that the tendency to certain evils is counteracted in one case by ample political precautions, in the other by the spirit of the age in addition. Our Executive is no match for the representative body in a contest for his being. Suppose a war, the executive power must be used, and perhaps would be abused; but the constitutional depositary would not hold it. The use must be obtained by usurpation, sanctioned by the necessity of the case. What is to keep armies subordinate to the civil power, especially after or during a war, but the interest and the means of the Executive to govern according to his functions by law instead of being controlled by usurped power? These Demos are just such friends to liberty as they would be to the Bank, if they forbid guards, locks, and keys for the safety of their vault. They are just such friends as have ever betrayed it when it has been lost. The country, I really believe, is more correct in opinion, and better disposed in point of feeling than they.

Is Lyon[1] still in your cage, or turned into the woods? I owe you more thanks for your attentions, so often repeated, than I have offered — not more than prompt me at this moment to subscribe myself Your friend.

[1] The *rencontre* between Lyon and Griswold, being the first case of the kind on the floor of Congress, excited more sensation than similar events do at the present time.

TO JAMES M°HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Dedham, February 18, 1798.

SIR, — I was honored by the last mail with your letter, and I lose no time to communicate the result of my most mature reflections upon the subject of it.

Though I want neither a sense of duty and attachment to the government, nor of grateful respect for the President, (from whom any mark of confidence is really an honor,) and though I am much affected and flattered by believing, as I do, that the expectation of good effects upon my health from the journey has contributed to my nomination as commissioner to hold a treaty with the Cherokees, — yet these considerations, powerful as they certainly are, yield, nevertheless, to others still more cogent, which compel me to decline the appointment. This I very respectfully beg leave to do.

My health is feeble; though it requires exercise, it is unequal to hardship and fatigue. The time of departure, the place of meeting, and most of the circumstances from which I might calculate the competency of my strength to the journey, are unknown to me.

I think myself bound in sincerity to disclose another obstacle to my acceptance.

The emoluments of my practice of the law are not very considerable. Such as they are, however, they are too essential to the support of my family to be neglected. It is sufficiently obvious that an absence of several months from the bar would reduce my part from little to less.

I cannot but hope the weight of my reasons will appear to justify the conclusion to which they have led me.

With sentiments of great respect, I have the honor to be,

Sir, your obedient, humble servant.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

February 25, 1798.

My Dear Friend, — Paine says this may go by a vessel to Ireland. I am not sure the postage on so large a packet will be compensated by the contents.

Mrs. A. left me on the 18th, and is at her father's. My solitary state will continue, I fear, a fortnight longer. It is no offset that I am to enjoy Judge Paine's company a part of this time. The Georgia cause is to be *broke* on demurrer to-morrow. The points will engage the zeal of counsel on both sides, and the anxious attention of the town of Boston. I hope for our friend, but I have my fears also.

The Attorney-General[1] and Chief Justice[2] are at open war. A committee of new trials received from the former a letter, in answer to their application for information respecting a cause, (The Commonwealth *vs.* Little,) in Maine, in which he says a new trial was granted by the Court, and that any other verdict of any other jury might as well be set aside. This roused the ire of the Chief Justice, who wrote to the General Court demanding a hearing on the floor, in exculpation of himself and associates. A committee is to report on this request, and it is expected will deny it; and the Chief Justice will not be so put off. How it will terminate, is matter of conjecture. A contest between these law chiefs amuses the town. The battle in Congress excites more wonder. Most persons justify Griswold for beating Lyon on their floor, where the latter spat in his face. That the whole affair will disgrace our country, all agree; but why, say they, should G. be more nice of the honor of the House, than the House itself? The disgrace was, they add, complete before, when they refused to expel Lyon for this unspeakable brutality, committed on Griswold while they were sitting. You brag of our country like a patriot. What will you say to spitting, caning, and cuffing, on the floor of Congress? The southern men of honor voted against the expulsion, and our

[1] James Sullivan.
[2] Francis Dana, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

three Massachusetts *antis*, Skinner, Varnum, and Freeman. The duellists, rather inconsistently, protect the aggressor in such a case. Is it not strange that Blount, who challenged Thacher for almost nothing, and . . . . , who was glad to be protected by the House against Gunn, should now vote in favor of Lyon? No! it is not strange.

On Thursday last, the 22d, the ex-President's birthday was celebrated in Concert Hall. The Governor and Judges were there, and your humble servant. The spirit and feelings of the day were exceedingly different from the timid and divided policy of our government. The people are as willing to follow good measures as they can be. They wish for peace; but they are impressible by appealing to their sense of duty and interest. The General Court have taxed dogs, and are about encouraging Justices. A bill has passed the House to give exclusive cognizance of all causes under one hundred dollars to these Solomons. The attempted judiciary bill, which contemplated a respectable County Court, is lost; and a scheme is pushing to erect a separate Supreme Court for Maine, *imperium in imperio*.

All eyes will soon turn to the event of the French preparations to invade England or Ireland. The threat may be of use to them, but the execution must be very difficult. To land is no easy matter; to establish themselves and to subdue a nation, fighting at home for their household gods, is still more difficult. But the French say therefore they will succeed; that victory is chained to their car. The attempt, if made without success, will greatly change the face of affairs. I should think the ascendency of England would, in that case, become very decided. You, on the spot, can judge of appearances better than any one at this distance. Heaven forbid that they should land and triumph! The world would have to wear chains.

Congress is so divided, and faction has so debased and alienated the *amor patriæ*, I almost despair of any right measures. A letter from Murray, at the Hague, says, unofficially, that there is no prospect of the success of our Envoys.[1] This he infers from a letter to him from General Marshall. You

[1] At Paris.

will favor me by as full information as you can find time to give, of the state and prospect of affairs. Excuse my illegible pages. All that you cannot decipher means, that I am affectionately Yours, &c.

P. S. The Spaniards, we hear, are actually engaged in giving up the Natchez, &c., to the United States; and the cloud in that quarter is believed to be dispersed before this day. This looks as if France intended to be sweeter than her treatment of our commissioners foreboded. Gerry, we hear by a Salem vessel from Bordeaux, is used much better than his colleagues. What means that?

Griswold, after beating Lyon on the floor, I this moment read, has, with Lyon, promised to keep the peace the remainder of the session. The affair is again committed.

TO JEREMIAH SMITH.

Boston, March 13, 1798.

My Dear Friend, — Do not wrong me so much as to suppose that my long delay in answering your letter (so full of wit and friendship) arose from any decline of my regard. I had resolved to write before I had yours. I have been busy, sick, and stupid for four weeks. I have been stupefying in the Supreme Court in this place, abusing the health I have acquired, and marring the prospect of its future improvement. No experience has been so decisive of my incompetence to any thing that excites or requires much engagement of mind, as that which I have lately had. Yet I am not dead, and hope to inhale health with the air and repose that next week offers at Dedham. Fate is heedless of my prayers, which are, to be in a situation to rear pigs and calves, and feed chickens at Dedham — the world forgetting, by the world forgot. Saving always, I would not forget my friends, nor have them forget me; — saving also the right, at all times, to rise into a rage against the politics

of Congress, and a few more savings, all equally moderate and reasonable. In serious sadness, I wish to rest from all labor of the mind that wears out the body, and I would do it if I could eat Indian pudding without drudging in Court. You, I hope, enjoy good fees, *cum dignitate* — happy you certainly are, and you know it. I have heard that Mrs. Smith had a long illness when she was confined. I have not been able to learn how she is of late, and I will thank you to offer to her my best wishes and regards. I salute my daughter-in-law,[1] whose merits and accomplishments are so rare and excellent. My eldest son[2] is at Springfield, and has there cast his eyes on a young lady of that town, but my second son is at present unengaged, and is offered to you as the party to the treaty.

Apropos of treaty, I am not going to see the Cherokees, the Tennessees, nor Sacs. I dare not, vain as I am, undertake to persuade the aborigines of any thing so difficult as the task allotted for an experiment of my powers, in your facetious letter. The journey is long, and would subject me to fatigues and hardship — the duty is complicated and difficult, and would expose me to responsibility which I should choose to shun; and the absence of four, five, or six months from my office would spoil my business, which I would not consent to for the public pay proposed. The decided hostility of these back settlers to the government, fomented by party, and protected by so many in the House, (where a majority votes against the stamp act,) is formidable, and will soon bring on a crisis. The Vermont liberty-pole men have now a banner to rally under. What anarchical notions we find prevailing! What other government finds the elements of discord and dissolution so powerful within its very bosom! Everywhere, out of the United States, the government, good or bad, has the power to act or forbear acting. Its difficulties, and the menaced resistance to its action lie without; here, they appear within. The machinery of our government, as understood by Gallatin and Co., is made to stand still, not to go. I hope New Hampshire keeps all its federal fires alive.

[1] At this time, six months old. [2] About five years old.

A letter left at Henry Vose's, *ci-devant* Brackett's, School street, would reach me duly. Pray remember you have such a place in my esteem, that it will be always acceptable to me to know how you do, &c., &c. Yours truly.

TO H. G. OTIS.

Dedham, April 23, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I have yours of the 16th, and besides the pleasure I derive from your political remarks, I am much pleased with your half page of egotism — first as a mark of your confidence, second as an opening to be free with you.

The reputation you carried with you was well earned and deserved, but, let me tell you, it was too good, and especially too brilliant, for Congress. Expectation in such cases is extravagant, and requires that to be accomplished which discretion forbids should be attempted. Unless a man could out-thunder Jove, he would disappoint folks. Now it is my creed that reputation will not grow up in Congress with the heat of one day, and the dew of one night, like lettuce. The basis on which it stands and strikes down its root, is confidence — confidence in the experienced ability and fairness of the man. It takes time, and a good deal of time, for the weak to know, with absolute certainty, who is strong enough to lean upon — who can bear his own weight and theirs. Those who grope in the dark, naturally seek those who can guide and enlighten their path; — but their first steps in the light are hesitating. Dropping metaphor, Congress is no place for sudden character, because most of the members are above blockheadship, if they fall below the sphere of genius. I do not forget the respectable exceptions that are to be made in favor of some of the worthies. I am therefore not only satisfied, but pleased with your discretion and reserve of yourself. Your place, for the reasons before stated, will not be lost by non-claim. I go on to observe, that I do not rank you lower on the list,

that the members assign to each other and the public to all, than I used to predict.

Your speech was good, but your letter to General H. better than good; it is excellent — useful to the public, reputable to you; and the strokes *ad captandum* are so blended with irony, that Roxbury vanity must be flattered and humbled at the same time. I write in confidence, and I should despise the thought of flattery. Rely on it, your friends exult on the perusal of the letter. You must not talk of fees, nor of being weary of well doing. The enlistment is such, you cannot return to private life yet, without desertion. I hope and trust your task will be in future less irksome, and more will help you. Folly has nearly burnt out its fuel, I mean the French passion; and the zeal of good men must be warmer and more active than it has been or we sink. It is too late to preach peace, and to say we do not think of war; a defensive war must be waged, whether it is formally proclaimed or not. That, or submission, is before us.

The President and his ministers are decidedly popular, and if a strong impulse should be given to the people, by the measures of government, the disorganizers would fall. But, when fallen, they would gnash their teeth. The late communications have only smothered their rage; it is now a coal-pit, lately it was an open fire. Thacher would say, the effect of the despatches is only like a sermon in hell to awaken conscience in those whose day of probation is over, to sharpen pangs which cannot be soothed by hope.

I am getting bitter; but to-morrow is our Common Pleas, and with *molliter manus imposuit*, a case or two of bastardy, and a writ of entry on disseisin, &c., &c., I shall be sick. God bless you. Yours.

Surely you will not rise till you have done something efficient.[1] We, the people, wait to take our tone from you.

[1] A very brief explanation of the position of our relations with France may be convenient at this point.

That government saw fit to consider the British treaty negotiated by Mr. Jay (that "*fatal treaty*," as Jefferson called it) as a violation of the rights of France, and to resent it accordingly. Our minister, Mr. Pinckney, was not received at Paris, and the Directory expressly declared that no American

Strong, energetic measures are more likely to be supported cheerfully, than half way things that presuppose discord and lukewarmness towards the cause and the government.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, June 4, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I have not seen any time when I thought the government stood as strong as at present. The male-contents never had any efficiency, and have lost at present even the appearance of strength. The Feds have at all times possessed a power which was inactive, but would have been irresistible, if occasion had called it forth. The occasion has happened, and the confidence in government, and zeal for it, appears to me great enough to encourage every attempt for good measures, and to sustain them when adopted. But

minister would be received, "until after that redress of grievances which France had a right to expect from the United States." While the door was thus closed against diplomatic intercourse, the seas were swarming with French privateers, and the most audacious and piratical plundering of our commerce was systematically carried on, on a very large scale, under the sanction of that government. A new mission, composed of Messrs. Pinckney, Marshall, and Gerry, was despatched by our government, and arrived at Paris in October, 1797. These gentlemen, with much patience and discretion, occupied themselves, for many weeks, in a fruitless endeavor to be received in their official capacity. While dancing attendance in this ineffectual manner, certain informal negotiators made great efforts to induce them to buy a favorable reception by large presents in money to influential members of the French government. They were also given to understand that a large loan of money from our own treasury to France, "our ancient ally," would be an indispensable condition to the making of any treaty whatever. Rejecting these delicate overtures, our commissioners were at last constrained to take their departure without ever having been received at all in their official character.

At the present period of our national strength, it is really hard to say which seems most amazing, the insolence of the French government, or the patience of our own. The despatches of our commissioners very naturally produced no little excitement, and very active and vigorous defensive preparations were made. A slight exertion of our actual naval strength was sufficient to clear the West India seas of the privateers, and to reduce the spoliations to comparatively narrow limits. The reluctance manifested in Congress to do even so much, appears at this day not a little remarkable.

as I know, and every mail brings proof, that Congress is yet far behind the people, I fear the occasion will pass over, and yield less fruit than it might and ought. The members still talk too much of peace, as if we had our choice, and as if we ought to choose it now. They are too much afraid of measures of self-defence, as if the French or our own citizens would think them crimes. They narrow the extent of those measures, and restrict the little they grant, to an excess. All, *all* we can do is little enough, but I really believe it would prove enough to keep the French in check. To be more explicit, I am sorry more force is not raised immediately; more, and a great deal more, revenue; the employment of the ships more like war; the obligation of our treaty with France legislatively declared null; the discretion vested in the President to embargo the trade to the French West Indies; a sedition bill; and generally more decision and more despatch in passing such acts as the urgent necessity of affairs demands. No good man desires more than the security of true liberty and independence; and no good citizen will now wince at measures tending to that point. The number of Jacobins is not too great. The contrast between the sentiments in doors and out should be strongly marked to be perceived, and to induce and almost to compel the southern electors to reform their representation. Such a mass of opposition as they combine must fall, or the government will; and it is against all good sense to imagine that evidence has convinced, and that conviction will convert them. At first it confounds, and next it will enrage them. They will soon rise from the mire, where they now lie, and attach themselves to any set of honest men, who in every question shall be for doing the least and the latest. Thus a new party may be formed to paralyze and distract our measures and our counsels, and the public, relapsing into its habitual apathy, will not again give the tone to government it has lately given. I repeat it, therefore, the moments are precious, and the friends of the government ought to act under that impression. Not one Jacobin is changed, though many are dumb. The light that guides others, makes their eyeballs ache. It is indeed very necessary that the thinking federalists should note well, that the causes of opposition to free

republican systems are in the heart of man and not to be eradicated. Truth has lately mown them down, but in six weeks they will sprout again, as unconquerable as the weeds. I will add that half measures are much harder to carry, and to support, than such as great perils call for. Half the debaters admit that to preserve peace is a duty, and therefore defensive measures are to be justified on ground so narrow and metaphysical, that all the weak federalists stagger or slide from it. No people can long keep steady in such a half state; and therefore a full state of *war*, waged but not *declared*, and limited cautiously to the existence of their vile acts, seems to me necessary to be passed by Congress with acclamation, and we the people will echo it. To annul the French treaty is also indispensable. Every day's delay is perilous. Everybody asks, shall we have war? My answer is, we have war, and the man who now wishes for peace holds his country's honor and safety too cheap. Cardinal de Retz, who well understood human nature, has shown the danger and folly of keeping multitudes long in suspense. Keep them in action, and shift the scenes, and you may succeed; but this state of passive obedience, this devout prayer for peace, when it is shameful for Congress-men to be caught at their prayers, will quench that fire which, like every other, will expire the sooner for burning briskly. In the actual state of things, government may give any proper tone to the people, and when once given it may be continued. I confess Congress has done better than I feared, but, I must not conceal, fall very far short of my wishes. Their beggarly system of starving their chief officers, and the committee system, must be changed. In their appropriations, they go into details on the pretence of vigilance, which transfer too much of the ministerial duty to the members. Congress should prescribe rules, the departments should apply them to the particular cases.

I did not foresee the course this letter would take, which is all the excuse I can offer for it.

The Legislature of Massachusetts is good. Judge of its federalism by one fact. Levi Lincoln, of Worcester, was not chosen representative by his town, and was only a candidate for the Senate, in which body he served the last year.

The two houses in convention gave him only seventeen votes out of one hundred and seventy-six, although his competitor was confessedly his inferior in every thing, but federalism. Other vacancies in the Senate have been filled up in a manner to indicate an equal preponderance of the anti-Gallic sentiment. Lincoln was obnoxious only as a Frenchman. Governor Sumner is rechosen by seventeen twentieths of the votes, and will address the two houses in language of decision, after which the Feds will vote a strong address to the President. It is only for the speech that they are waiting. I almost fear that the *antis* are down too low in our General Court to produce warmth by collision. Among other pointings of the public opinion, I mark with pleasure that the necessity of an efficient naval force is acknowledged, and it will be an easy thing to animate New England to insist upon it as a local right. I fear, however, that it will be difficult to prevent bad economy in the construction, and bad conduct in the first operations, of our ships. I should regret this the more, as it might disgust our citizens against naval protection. I cannot be insensible to the difficulty of selecting the best characters for the Navy Secretaryship, as the compensation is inadequate. Some of your countrymen know the weight of the services and toils which the heads of the departments have to sustain. The good will offer, as a partial reward, their thanks and esteem, and the bad will add the honorable testimony of their calumny. Thus far you may be very sure of your reward. I am, with unfeigned esteem,

Your most obedient, humble servant.

P. S. I have seen Mr. Stoddert, of Georgetown, but I cannot believe he will accept; he appeared to be a man of good sense.

When you see Mr. Goodhue, I pray you offer him my regards, instead of a letter which I had intended to write.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER.

Dedham, June 24, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — Colonel Dwight is with me, and speaks of you in a manner that revives my sense of your obliging attentions. I wish your body was half as federal as that he belongs to. I am a state-government man, you know, and I am half willing Congress should order, assign, and indorse its powers to our General Court. The timid, doubting spirit of the former, that seems yet undecided whether to serve God or Mammon, would do for Switzerland, for the *Bullocks* of Europe, whose necks are patient of the yoke, but ill suits the Yankee stiffness. The impulse given by the Despatches[1] to the people is excellent, and is yet strong; but it is too much to expect that any popular impulse will last long, and not only go right, but keep government right. Yet, as your body is using *dampers*, that last duty is needful. Rely on it, trimming will expose the members to a severe account. Bullock is spoken of as a doubtful man. S. Lyman wrote some letters home, condemning long speeches and warm zeal, which ill accord with the decided spirit of his district.

Senator Dexter called, the instant I wrote the last word, on his return from Newport. His election is a good proof of the excellent disposition of our General Court. His talents will prop our federal temple; and, as war is evidently unavoidable, the employment of such talents is important.

The French will try arts and arms to trouble our politics, more than to subdue our strength; and, therefore, timid, temporizing measures will be out of season, and out of credit. Is Bullock turning *anti?* Is Coit incurable? The policy of the French is never so blind as ours. They discern and they seize all advantages at the very critical moment. How does Fenno succeed? He is a good man and true, and merits success. Porcupine is patronized, and I hope Fenno is not neglected. Will Virginia amend its delegation, that is, make a new one? Yours, truly.

[1] From the commissioners at Paris, giving an account of the attempts to obtain bribes from them. It was deemed prudent, in their despatches, to suppress the names of the persons by whom the propositions were urged, and they were described as X, Y, and Z.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, July, 1798.

My Dear Sir, — Finding the minds of our people in Dedham and its vicinity unexpectedly well prepared, I recommended to some very capable young men an oration, dinner, patriotic song, &c., &c. A week only remained for preparation before the 4th instant. But antifederal and Gallic as our people have been, the proposition took exceedingly well. I am happy to announce to you, that it has succeeded; and, inconsiderable as the politics of a village may be, yet, as an indication of the progress of right opinions, and as a proof of the rapid decline of Gallicism where it was lately strongest, and is still perhaps the most malevolent in spirit that exists, it will not be deemed quite unimportant.

The company at dinner was about sixty. The number of men of education was unusually great. Five clergymen attended, whose hearts are with us. Three signed the address, two others retired before it was proposed, a sixth was invited, and, like the rest of his valuable order, was federal, but could not attend. Among the signers are magistrates, men of influence in their several circles, enlightened farmers, and mechanics. On the whole, I may say, with truth, no meeting has been held in this part of the country, within my memory, equally respectable. It was not attempted to get subscribers to the address out of the number of those who were present on the occasion, and, as you see, it was nearly unanimous. As our representative in the General Court did not vote for the address of that body, we conceived it right and proper to signify for ourselves that we are not of his antifederal sect. I am persuaded the effect of the meeting will be salutary, and will rally the friends of government to their posts. Our representative was at the dinner, but declined signing, as consistency required that he should.

On the whole, I am confident that vigor in Congress would electrify this part of the country, and mount their zeal up to the old revolutionary pitch. I wish Congress may not take another nap so long and benumbing to their patriotism as the last. I am, dear sir, with great respect,

Your very humble servant.

The address will be sent to you under another cover. If you think these particulars worthy of the President's notice, please to let him read this.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, July 10, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — Your obliging letter, besides the pleasure it afforded on other accounts, relieved me from the stings of a bad conscience, which had continually reproved me for writing *that* to which yours was an answer. I had really feared mine was an unwarranted intrusion upon the time of a man so oppressed with the weight of correspondence as you are. To avoid the sin of augmenting this burden, I will add, that I do not expect you will answer this. You have intimated that I may communicate my thoughts, which is as much as I ought to engross of your time.

The burden of my former letter was, that the people could not be kept up at the height of zeal where they are, if Congress should finally bind us all up in the frost of that Platonism they so much affect. Half measures are seldom generally intelligible, and almost never safe, in the crisis of great affairs. The answers of the President have elevated the spirit, and cleared the filmy eyes, of the many. The people have risen *gradatim;* every answer was a step up stairs. But Congress follows too slowly, and unless they make haste to overtake the people, the latter, I fear, will begin to descend. I should be absolutely certain of this collapsing and sinking of the public, if I did not depend on the friendly profligacy of the French. They will kick us into courage. Their plan allows us no retreat. The southern Congress men will be obliged, at last, to feel French blows, with some pain, through their thick skins, although hitherto what has wounded others only tickles them. To us, the wrongs of France are whips of scorpions; to them, the strokes of a feather. As France aims at empire,

and will exact compliances unexpected even by democrats; as she wants cash, and will insist on more than they will freely give, — I calculate on her doing for us, at last, that which Congress seems resolved shall not be attributable to the energy and wisdom of our counsels. If, in the interim of our infatuated torpor and indecision, she should condescend to resort to fraud and flattery, we should even yet be lost. But as her violence and arrogance happily lessen our fears on that head, I calculate on the eventual resort of Congress to measures of force. Internal foes can do us twice as much harm as they could in an open war. The hope of peace is yet strong enough to furnish the means of popular influence and delusion; at any rate, it chills the spirit of the citizens, and distracts them in the exercise of duty. I wish therefore, impatiently, to see Congress urged to proceed to steps which will have no such ambiguity in them. A declaration of war would be such a step. But it is the very one that their imbecility would reluct at; it is the very one that demands something like unanimity. I think this very reluctance might be used to advantage. Instead of *declaring* war in form, could they not be persuaded, even some of the Demos, to *enact* penal laws, *as if* it was war? To do something short of duty, something tamer than energy, suits the foible of the weak, temporizing, trimming members.

I should imagine a number, who would flinch from a *declaration of war*, would urge the enacting, one by one, the effects of a state of war. Not being on the spot, I can judge only from my knowledge of some characters, and the color of their conduct and speeches; with such materials I may be deceived in my conclusion. I think it probable, however, that several votes could be gained for strong measures, from the dread of being urged to adopt still stronger. Energy is a word of comparison, and to vote *as if* we were in war, might seem a half-way business, compared with *a declaration* of war. In this way they may authorize the burning, sinking, and destroying French ships and property *gradatim*, till no case is left which is to shelter them from hostility. As every armed French vessel takes our vessels, every armed French vessel should be prize, every one on board a prisoner; correspondence with the French, adhering to our enemies,

&c., &c. I need not detail the consequences of this idea, as they will occur to you, nor discriminate the odds between a formal declaration of war, which would instantly draw after it all the consequences of a state of war, and a series of acts of Congress, which would annex to our state of peace all those consequences, one by one.

The difference of effect on the public mind is also worth computation and deliberation.

To declare is to choose war; it is voluntarily changing our condition, which however urgent the reasons and motives of the change may be, leaves a door open for blame on the government; it is, no doubt, a change at all times involving a high responsibility. Disasters in the conduct of a war would aggravate first ill impressions, and give a malecontent party a specific text of sedition. Ripe as the citizens are for self-defence, they reluct at offence; they would yield much, far too much, for peace; and this hope would delude them, if proud France would condescend to hold it out. Now why should not we play off against our foe a part of their own policy? Wage war, and call it self-defence; forbear to call it war; on the contrary, let it be said that we deprecate war, and will desist from arms, as soon as her acts shall be repealed, &c., &c., grounding all we do on the necessity of self-preservation, &c. We should need no negotiation to restore peace; at least we should act, as the *salus Reipublicæ* demands we should, instantly, and there would be little balancing among the citizens, and the spirit would grow warmer in its progress. But a formal declaration would perhaps engender discords; all the thinking would come first, the action after. I would reverse this order. Not that I would conceal from the country its duties or its dangers. No, they should be fully stated and enforced. I would, however, oppose art to art, and employ, in self-defence against French intrigue, some of those means of influence which we may lawfully use, and which her party will so much abuse if we do not first possess them.

My long letter amounts to this: we must make haste to *wage war*, or we shall be lost. But in doing it, and, I might premise, to induce Congress to do it, and that without its ordinary slowness, we had better begin at the tail of the

business, and go on enacting the consequences of war, instead of declaring it at once. The latter might be the bolder measure; its adaptedness to the temper of Congress, and even of the country, is not equally clear. Something energetic and decisive must be done soon. Congress fiddles while our Rome is burning. America, if just to her own character, and not too frugal of her means, can interdict France the ocean. Great Britain will keep her close in her European ports; we can clear our coasts, and, before long, the West Indian seas. My faith is that we are born to high destinies. The length of this letter, and the fear of being too officious, restrains me from descanting on our prospects, as to our government, and as to any alliance with England. As to the former idea, governments are generally lost from bashfulness. Great occasions, like the present, either overturn or establish them.

I am ashamed to begin a third sheet. I have written very rapidly, as you will have already observed, and with less revisal and care than I ought. I am so earnestly engaged in thought on the state of our country, and so anxious to see its measures answer the noble style of the President's replies to addresses, as well as correspond with the peril arising from the power and insidious art of our foe, that I cannot forbear pouring myself forth in this way. Congress is willing to do little, at a time when less than all we can do is treachery. We halt apparently between two opinions, at a time when the alternative is war or subjugation.

I inclosed our address lately to you. Jacobinism, in the vicinity of Boston, is not yet dead, it sleepeth.

I am, respectfully, &c., Your most obedient servant.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

July 28, 1798.

My Dear Friend, — You ask for letters from America with such earnestness, I am half persuaded to think mine may be worth rather more in the London market than at

home in the factory. I do not pick a quarrel with you because it is so long, so very long, since the date of your last. I lay it all to the French, or if that should be an error, I will charge it to hurry, to the supposed allowance of letters to other friends, such as George Cabot, *as if* they were addressed to me. I will never tease a real friend on this account, as I know there is no danger of your forgetting me, and for any other reason I care not a pin.

Your last was, I think, dated in February. I have written in folio since, like a Dutch civilian. I know not what I write, as I keep no copies, premeditate nothing, and say to myself, it is only for my Gore. I would be very wise if I could on the subject of our government, but the weather is too warm. Congress is up, and has *middled* its measures without being *tutissimus*. The last measure, a bounty per gun captured, was negatived by Harper's perverseness. Did Lord Grenville and Mr. Dundas know that their eulogium on his book would help the French by marring a good thing of Congress? Yet so it was. H. is a fine fellow, but praise has half spoiled him, and made him sometimes cold and sometimes opposed towards right things originated by others. George Cabot thinks the act not so very material. I do not concur with him. It would have wakened the privateering spirit, cut out work for the active, warmed the frigid, and placed our safety beyond the dreaded stroke of French coaxing. I own my hope is that we are beyond it. But as the trade of France affords no prizes, something was needed to give a spur, instead of the usual one. A bounty per gun was that spur. I am afraid of inertness, of languor, of the collapsing of the national spirit; an event always to be feared when there is much to apprehend and little to do. France will not forgive us for doing so much, and I am in a patriotic rage because we do so little. Should they fly into a passion, as their manner is, and wage an open war, we shall know what to do. There will be no puzzle about measures, and little ground to fear the event. For surely we can beat Frenchmen. The Austrian men think the French devils. Our Marblehead boys shall thrash them at the rate of two to three. The President will be in a hurry to see Congress speedily together again, sooner, I think, than December.

Mr. Gerry's return is earnestly desired. He will reap the harvest he has sowed. His stay was well calculated to spoil every good act of our government, but it has not. I do not rail at Congress for *not declaring* war, but then they ought to have gone the farther in *waging* it. Nothing doubtful in the situation of the United States, or in the duty of citizens should have been left. The donations to build ships is noble, and will soon form a decent naval force. *Hone*, and the Chronicle wretches, are despised and abhorred; but their malice is unchanged, and I dread of all things a revolution in Paris or a change of system, that would try art in place of force against us. For the fallen Jacobins would rise recruited, from bathing in the mud where they now lie, and the impressions in favor of a delusive, fatal peace would be perhaps irresistible. God forbid! I hate war as much as anybody, but nothing else can save us from France. Many supposed good men showed great weakness in Congress.

The President has turned out three Portsmouth Jacobins from office. One Whipple has sued Ben Russell for a paragraph, which, he says, lost him the office. I admit it is actionable and slanderous to call a man democrat; but this W. passed for such for years, and if he bore it quietly, let him sit down with the consequence. . . . . .

Are we not, on the whole, a very incorrect people — not more than half in earnest in our best principles. Our very political righteous are to be saved only from free grace, as their theory is almost ever visionary or pernicious. It is true they seldom long stand to it, but are led by good affections and by the impulse of events to act beyond the squeamish mediocrity of their whims. The federal government would have been years ago in its grave, and in oblivion, if the providence of man had alone watched over it. Events supply the place of wisdom and of habit. I do not say this to detract from Washington, Adams, &c., God bless them, but to reiterate my conviction, that we are democrats playing republicanism. I love and reverence the latter. I do really think it practicable, and monarchy, though excellent in England, impracticable here. But it will require great efforts to procure a fair chance for the former in the United States. I do this justice, however, to our citizens. They

receive strong impressions of political truth very readily, and are as much affected by it as any people ever known; witness the late Despatches: they really electrified all classes. To open the cabinet, to play government as it were in the street, and to affect the merit of introducing the sovereign people into negotiations, is a concession and a precedent from the event. In future we may find we have done some evil that great good might come of it. I see that Great Britain (and even the Emperor) talks democracy to the nation. So the world is changed.

Will there be a new coalition against France? Is Prussia to be paid for duplicity, by the gift of French principles? Is Russia to be always seeming to act, and never acting? Is the Emperor so thrashed, that he can only wait till the scabs fall off from his old wounds? Is his new territory to be kept under only by force, which, employing a part of his troops, weakens him, while Belgium, &c., adds much to the power of France? Is Spain to be revolutionized, demoralized, and minted by France, or to rejoin Great Britain? Is the Toulon fleet to catch the King of Naples and his little navy, or to dig a canal through Egypt into the Red Sea, or to help the Irish liberty boys? Is Great Britain to be better or worse by the state of things between the United States and France? A little squadron cruising on our coast, and a larger, duly active, in the West India seas, would keep all pirates close. Yours, once more.

My question above relates to spoliations. Will Great Britain act rightly, or rely on our being obliged to fight her foe, and be tolerably civil to her, whether she does our folks justice or not? Woe be to her greatness if she plays such a dirty game. Rufus King will tell the great ones that tricks of that sort will not answer.

God bless Mrs. G., so says and prays my wife, and I say, Amen.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, September 25, 1798.

My Dear Friend,—

. . . . . .

Boston has been worse afflicted, for a few days past, than its inhabitants, jealous of its fame for salubrity, would own, as long as they could help it.[1] My creed is, that the fever is yet either an unknown malady, or so rapid in its march that remedies come too late. This is certain, all the systems of cure have been equally disgraced by the event. This town is perfectly healthy. . . . . .

My own health is much mended, since a cold, got at the Supreme Court, went off. Like an evil spirit, it threw me down before it was cast out, and produced a fainting turn, which, however, was not followed by the great prostration of strength I have generally experienced in like cases. . . I am bound fast in chains of darkness in the Common Pleas, for the week, and hope to survive some few ten-dollar causes which are intrusted to my care.

. . . . . .

Philadelphia has sipped the bitter dregs from the cup of affliction. If legislative bounty to our cities, to supply water to wash the streets, would afford security against the return of this curse, which is becoming almost annual, I should rejoice to see it granted, and liberally. The reputation of our country is impaired, which is some evil in commerce. I agree with you, the probable check of *patriotic* emigrants would be no matter of grief. Perhaps the overgrowth of cities may not be desirable, as they render the operations of our government rather more problematical for a length of years. These speculative ideas are no counterpoise to the evil of the fever, and if a remedy could be had for money, it would be cheap.

Report says Mr. Gerry is to return, with a Frenchman as an envoy, to coax, and lie, and sow division. For every purpose that demands negotiation, they might proceed at

[1] The yellow fever prevailed at this time in Boston and Philadelphia.

Paris, and Mr. Gerry was not disliked as a diplomatic man. The project, therefore, is on its very face unfair and insidious. But many will be deluded, and the mock converts among the democrats would take the occasion to go back to their old cause and companions. Nicholson's capture of the twenty-gun ship is a good thing as an antidote to French *diplomatic skill.* I have never thought France would be angry with any thing we do, but to supplicate and kneel. *Our* spirit is sure to mollify *hers.* Hypocrisy is her only weapon. Without ships, she cannot much annoy us; and she will not, by declaring war in form, deprive herself of the means of carrying it on by lies and intrigues—her only means. Your friend.

Alas, poor John Fenno,[1] a worthy man, a true federalist, always firm in his principles, mild in maintaining them, and bitter against foes and persecutors. No printer was ever so *correct* in his politics. . . . . .

TO JEREMIAH SMITH.

Boston, November 22, 1798.

My Dear Friend, — Seeing Mr. Conner in an office, I steal a moment from the din of the Supreme Court, sitting here, to tell you I am alive, pretty well, very glad to hear from you and your better half, as I do by Mr. Conner. Write to me, and kiss my daughter-in-law, the princess. Her future spouse is a fine fat boy, as ragged and saucy as any democrat in Portsmouth. You have none in Exeter. They abound in Dedham, though the liberty-pole is down. Nelson has beaten the French fleet. Do not grieve for that. What are we to do? The devil of sedition is immortal, and we, the saints, have an endless struggle to maintain with

[1] Editor of the Gazette of the United States. His death had recently been announced.

him. Your State is free enough from his imps and influence, to give joy and courage to the two Langdons.[1] I really wish to see you and Mrs. Smith. God bless you.

Yours.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, November 22, 1798.

DEAR SIR, — I was at Albany when I first saw the letter you addressed to the democrat Johnston, and which, on my return, I found you had obligingly inclosed to me. I was gratified to perceive that its spirit was felt, and its reasoning duly apprehended, by most persons. Few publications in favor of government appear to me to have been so generally well received. The public mind is as near right as it can be, and nearer than it can be long kept, if Congress should flinch from spirited measures. I had, six months ago, some hopes, but they were then faint, that the pride of France would prevail over her artful policy. It is, however, apparent that the proud are the lowest stoopers, and that their palaver, as the tars call it, will be more *outré* than even their former insolence. Great care seems necessary, that the answer of the House to the President's speech should be in unison with the voice of America. The faction is not changed, nor like to be; and the Chronicle has been puffing the votes for Heath as a muster of their strength. They are overjoyed to find they yet have any, and that the resources afforded to their cause by popular credulity, envy, and levity, are not soon to be exhausted. If the elections should go very badly, (and I fear it,) our danger will be, perhaps, greater than ever, unless the fate of France should be so far decided, in the interim, as to take away from our perverseness the option of public ruin.

[1] Governor John Langdon, and Judge Woodbury Langdon.

It is very important that Congress should not retrograde any thing, in its approaching short session; and yet that body has manifested, on most critical occasions, so much imbecility to act, and so much energy within itself to oppose acting, that no great advance in the measures of defence can be expected, if it should be necessary to make any. The Gallatins will argue publicly, or, more probably, will whisper to the members whose votes they influence, that even if France is deceitful, her hypocrisy may be a good reason for jealousy and vigilance, but is none for our hostility; that events show that the force we begin to prepare will not be wanted, and that our country, once at war, will be more exposed to its chances and reverses, and still more to the insidious and enslaving friendship of Great Britain, than to the apprehended deceit and ambition of the Directory. Noah Webster, I perceive, says we must have a fleet, and, *therefore*, we do *not* want an army. It is also an even chance that the men, who deprecated measures of self-defence, because France is omnipotent, and would resent any thing but the raising our hands suppliant and unarmed, will change their tune, and insist that Nelson has so reduced that omnipotence, that our resistance is not necessary to shield us from her domination. Thus the power of that restless state is at one time to be an excuse for our timidity, and at another for our supineness or instability of counsels. I hope our good men in Congress will take due pains to animate the public spirit, which is high enough to second the government, but cannot be expected to keep up its own tone long, and to impart one to Congress. Even Mr. Gerry, I hear, says that nothing is to be expected from negotiation; that harmony of opinion and energy in measures must be inculcated; that Congress has done well in the latter concern, and if it has failed, it is that enough was not done; that France has no liberty, the people no voice, and the government no integrity; that its objects are all temporary, &c. How he can reconcile such ideas, with such conduct as his mission led him to follow, I know not.

The liberty-pole in this town was cut down by some federal young men of Dedham, who were attacked by the seditious, and one of their number seized. To get his liberty, he very indiscreetly paid the mob guard, of five, twenty dollars.

One of the persons concerned in raising the pole, an opulent farmer, has been arrested and bound over. The deluded are awed by this measure, but the effect is not so great as their intemperance and folly merit. The powers of the law must be used moderately, but with spirit and decision, otherwise great risk of disorders will be incurred. I hope you are, with your family, safe in Philadelphia from fever, and not disquieted by the dread of it. I am, dear sir, with great esteem, &c. Your very humble servant.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, December 7, 1798.— Friday evening.

DEAR FRIEND, — Fearing that Mr. D. L. will leave town, I write in haste to acknowledge your favor. Your letters, rely on it, are always very acceptable, as they always evince a friendship I ought to cherish, and I do. My Springfield friends have a high place in my regards; and as there is every reason why I should value them very much, I trust I shall be believed when I make some professions of attachment, which I do seldomer than I feel inclined. A charming letter of Mrs. Bliss's, written with a contagious tenderness of heart, has provoked me to express the sensibilities she has excited. But as I am awkward at this civil work, I will drop it before I begin it. There is Paddy for you.

I wish you had been more particular as to the effect of the pool on your complaint. Has it cured, has it even alleviated, your case? I invite you to bring Mrs. D. with you to the Court. It will be good for the salt rheum. I keep a good fire, and temperance will be an easy virtue to practise, where there is no luxury.

The severe weather gives a value to my preparation of a good wood-pile, a new coal-house filled with charcoal, a stove in my kitchen with an oven that yields a good crop of hot apple pies, &c., &c. I have also made a new hen-house for my pullets to roost, and all these projects nearly addle me

with joy. Nelson's victory pleases other people, and is a good thing; — next to my stove and coal-house, a very good thing, as it reduces the pride and the power of the evil *one*, and the more evil *five*.[1] Our wise fools will cry peace, and hope a revolution in Paris. I do not wish it. These rogues, being known as such, are to be preferred to any new set yet to be found out.

Congress will soon manifest its disposition to persevere in well-doing to the end, or to flinch from it. I fear the latter, as their courage was, the last summer, when it was the most extolled, a mere *make believe*. Rely on it, our teaching is to cost something. We are to feel birch, before we learn political wisdom. Our *antis* will at last take arms against the laws. Their folly, their want of spirit, and the course of events, have checked their malice. The crisis, so often delayed, will come. I will not proceed any further with the dismal prophecies my fixed and habitual creed would dictate. Vigor in our government would delay their accomplishment, and perhaps finally prevent them from happening at all. But the parsimony that will starve talents out of office, or forbid their acceptance of it, will, I fear, greatly lessen the chances of such an administration, for the next ten or twenty years, as would impart strength to our federal system. My decided belief is, our federal men are very incorrect, and more than half democrats in their doctrines. They act right indeed, from hatred and dread of the democrats. Their theory is yet to be settled by severer experience than our kind fates have called us to suffer. Precept is thrown away on mankind. The stripes of adversity, while they tingle, print political instruction more than skin deep. We must smart for all the knowledge that will abide.

Dedham thrives in house and business, and our tradesmen are growing richer. I do not think we grow worse in sin and Jacobinism. Thatcher's parish is confessedly the worst. The south (Chickering's) is decidedly federal; and the old parish, where I live, is divided — the old are half Demos, the young chiefly Feds. The tone of Hampshire and Berkshire is excellent. . . . . .

[1] The French Directory.

L. B. desired me to coax you for a vote to make him something, — I think, a notary.

My health would be good if I could exercise. I wish for an estate to follow the business of doing nothing, which I would diversify by a trip to the Saratoga Spring, or some other distant place, twice a year. Application to my profession takes away my stomach. If I do not apply, I have a good stomach, and no bread.

With my best regards to Mrs. D., and at Col. Worthington's, I am truly yours.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

December 18, 1798.

My Dear Friend, — Your letters would be valuable if they were not scarce, as they are; and mine would be cheap if I did not labor so much to make them plenty. The scene you survey, and your place near the point or fulcrum of the British power, make me greedy for the news you send, or the comments that explain it. My seat in my chimney-corner compels me to generalize my ideas, and to bore you with essays, instead of amusing you with intelligence. All that I can write about is already pretty familiar to you. I know little of European events, and the characters of their drama. Expect, therefore, to be weary of the task assigned you, of satisfying my curiosity, and of the epistolary good works, on which I found my claim to your compliance.

The struggle with our Jacobins is like the good Christian's with the evil one. It is no amusement to the bystander, and is barren of events for description. Besides, one cannot tell how much others have gone into detail in their letters to you, nor what parts of our drama excite your curiosity, and to write every thing is impossible.

These are my apologies for being dull. When the despatches from our envoys were published here, the Jacobins were confounded, and the trimmers dropt off from the party,

like windfalls from an apple-tree in September, the worst of the fruit — vapid in cider and soon vinegar. The wretches looked round, like Milton's devils when first recovering from the stunning force of their fall from Heaven, to see what new ground they could take. The alien and sedition bills, and the land tax, were chosen as affording topics of discontent, and, of course, a renewal of the popularity of the party. The meditated vengeance and the wrongs of France done by our treaty, were less spouted on. And the implacable foes of the Constitution — foes before it was made, while it was making, and since, — became full of tender fears lest it should be violated by the alien and sedition laws. You know that federalists are forever hazarding the cause by needless and rash concessions. John Marshall, with all his honors in blossom and bearing fruit, answers some newspaper queries unfavorably to these laws. George Cabot says that Otis, our representative, condemns him *ore rotundo*, yet, inconsistently enough, sedulously declares his dislike of those laws. G. C. vindicates J. M., and stoutly asserts his soundness of federalism. I deny it. No correct man, — no incorrect man even, — whose affections and feelings are wedded to the government, would give his name to the base opposers of law, as a means for its annoyance. This he has done. Excuses may palliate, — future zeal in the cause may partially atone, — but his character is done for. *Hæret lateri lethalis* Virginia newspaper. Like a man who in battle receives an ounce ball in his body — it may heal, it lies too deep to be extracted; but, on every change of weather, it will be apt to fester and twinge. There let it lie. False federalists, or such as act wrong from false fears, should be dealt hardly by, if I were Jupiter Tonans.[1] The theory of the Feds is worse than that of the *antis*, in one respect. They help the government at a pinch, and then shout victory for two seconds, — after which, they coax and try to gain the *antis*, by yielding the very principles in dispute. The moderates are the meanest of cowards, the falsest of hypocrites. The other side has none of them, though it abounds in every

[1] This spleen at John Marshall was by no means the writer's deliberate or permanent sentiment.

other kind of baseness. Their Guy Fauxes are no triflers. They have energy enough to vindicate the French, and, if opportunity favored, to imitate them. They stick to the cause, and never yield any thing that can be contested, nor even then, without a more than equivalent concession. They beat us in industry, audacity, and perseverance; and will at last meet us in the field, where they will be beaten.

There is no describing the impulse they have given their party to decry these acts. They have sent runners everywhere to blow the trumpet of sedition. One David Brown, a vagabond ragged fellow, has lurked about in Dedham, telling everybody the sins and enormities of the government. He had been, he said, in all the offices in all the States, and knew my speculating connection with you, and how I made my immense wealth. I was not in this part of the country, otherwise I should have noticed his lies, — not to preserve my reputation, but to disarm his wickedness. Before I returned from my trip to the westward, he had fled, and a warrant to apprehend him for sedition was not served. He had, however, poisoned Mr. Thatcher's parish, and got them ready to set up a liberty-pole, which was soon after actually done. This insult on the law, was the cause of sending out the marshal with his warrant; but the Feds of Mr. Chickering's parish had previously cut down the pole. One of the Fed party was, however, seized by the mobbers, and twenty dollars extorted from him before he got free. There is at least the appearance of tardiness and apathy, on the part of government, in avenging this insult on law. But the judge and attorney think all is done right. The government must display its power *in terrorem*, or, if that be neglected or delayed, in earnest. So much irritable folly and credulity, managed by so much villany, will explode at last; and the issue will be tried, like the ancient suits, by wager of battle.

I think the clamor against the alien law, a proof that the party has chosen to make one, and that it makes no odds on what the choice falls, an equal clamor being excitable on one as much as on another subject. The *salus Reipub.* so plainly requires the power of expelling or refusing admission to aliens, and the rebel Irish, and negroes of the West Indies

so much augment the danger, that reason, one would think, was disregarded by the Jacobins, too much even to be perverted. Kentucky is all alien; and we learn that the Governor Gerard has made a most intemperate address to the legislature of that State, little short of a manifesto. This is said to be echoed by the legislature. In that case, the issue must be tendered and tried. The gazettes will, no doubt, explain the fact to you more fully than I can at present.

I hear that one of our *trio* says, that he could not, with *any safety*, refuse compliance with the demand to disclose the X, Y, Z of the Paris business. Can any words express the *merit* of the man, who can now plead his fears as his apology? Were I intrusted by a great nation, and called to act on a great stage, I should pray God to give me courage to defy a thousand deaths in such a case,—or, if that should fail me, that I might have the discretion to let others find out some better excuse for my conduct than that I was *afraid*. Will not Europeans note such facts, and, if they feel a spirit of candor, say for us, that we are yet new in our independence, and that the notions of shame and honor, though not factitious in their origin, are so in their application? Our public men, they will say, will learn when they ought to lose life sooner than honor.

My wife joins with me in offering our united regards to you and Mrs. G. Yours.[1]

[1] The following, from one of Mr. Gore's letters to Mr. Ames, may interest the reader.

London, 20th December, 1798.

My Dear Friend,—

. . . . . .

You will see in the papers a speech of a Mr. Canning, on the motion of Tierney. This man undoubtedly possesses talents, and is a scholar of no common attainments. He is Under-Secretary of State, and the particular protégé of Mr. Pitt. His speech is cried up here as a prodigy of eloquence, classical learning, and political wisdom; and it is not improbable that this very speech may waft him to a peerage. Less admired performances have been attended with such consequences. It is a country where talents are abundantly rewarded, and where eloquence, to use Ross's expression, is omnipotent. On the subject of eloquence, some things would surprise you. The gift is local. To explain myself:— The short time Mr. Pitt was at the bar, he displayed nothing remarkable. His first entrée in the House of Commons discovered him a giant, boasting of his strength, and desirous of combating with the most powerful and adroit. Erskine, who is unrivalled at the bar, and with ease talks down his brother barristers, courts, and jury,

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

January 11, 1799.

DEAR FRIEND, — I passed two or three hours of the last evening with Paine, at your house in town, and while he was making himself up as a beau to dance, we chatted about your farm. I should have enjoyed it better had you been there, as I think I possess a tolerably good theory in agriculture to lose money. My creed is, that grazing is more profitable than tillage, and that farming on a scale beyond one man's (the owner's) immediate superintendency, is not adapted to this country. Paine says that General Heath gets three thousand dollars a-year by the vegetables, &c., from his farm; and he talks of engaging, and interesting on shares, some good young fellow to manage your place (or the garden there) in that way. I solicit the honor of being appointed to the post of privy counsellor, or secretary of your cabbage and squash department. Am I not qualified by my knowledge and experience, to advise Paine in such affairs? Paine denies my doctrines respecting a piggery. In order to augment the heap of manure, I am as tenacious of my system to fill the styes, as any Charlestown man. The cows

attempts to speak in Parliament, only to be disgraced. However well prepared, and this is always the case, in his own opinion, he can never find utterance there, and is obliged to have recourse to the press to communicate what he considers oracular sayings to the gaping multitude.

There is very little opposition to the measures of administration at present in Parliament; and abroad there appears but one sentiment — hatred to the French, and confidence in their own will and resources to humble the enemy and support their own situation, which they consider the most enviable of the world: and justly too, so far as respects all nations but our own. And here, my friend, if we enjoy but the same temper, the same self-confidence and respect for our constitution and laws, we shall be safe; and may cut and carve for ourselves such a fair portion of the globe, as to enable us to live within our own hemisphere, uninterested and unconcerned spectators of what Europe, Asia, and Africa may choose to enterprise or achieve. . . . .

I read Pickering's letter to the addressers of Prince Edward county with great delight. This is a most estimable man, who does much honor to our country in Europe, and supports its honor with becoming spirit and dignity. It is understood Gerry is a candidate for Congress, and I predict that he will be chosen. The elections which have come to our knowledge, by no means correspond with the good temper discovered in the addresses to the President.

of our country are said to be inferior to the English. Is this true? Is it owing to neglect of the breed, or to our climate or herbage? You are a patriot. Ought you not to send a bull and cow of the Alderney race?

After all, my theory ends in this — either you must pursue such a plan as will do without much care, as grazing, which executes itself, or procure that in the degree required by interesting another in the process. I shall therefore try to get a good young fellow to treat with Paine for the charter of his market-cart. I know one of whom I think favorably.

Can you bear with me? Do I *bore* you with the subject of husbandry? or is it still enough your hobby to revive your old sensibilities? If you still like the theme, it will be wholesome to give you these two pages, as the smell of the clods of fresh earth is said to abate the virulence of the sea scurvy. If you are crammed with politics as we are, any change, even to less delicate fare, will be a feast.

By looking at Congress you will see that the French faction there is no better than formerly. Gallatin and Nicholas vindicate Logan's mission[1] very boldly. The country, where such abominations as they utter can be even tolerated, is to be tried and purified in the furnace of affliction. Are Englishmen, even the malecontents, in the habit of prating as perversely as our Demos?

Virginia, excited by crazy Taylor, is fulminating its manifesto against the federal government, as we hear. But the papers as yet only state that the *antis* prevailed on the decision of Taylor's motion. The precise nature of their proceedings is not fully known. The more absurd and violent the better. The less will it be in the power of government to forbear proper measures, or to adopt them by halves, and the more will the spirit of the Virginia Feds rise; for Feds there are even in Virginia.

[1] Dr. Logan, of Philadelphia, visited France in August, 1798, as a sort of volunteer ambassador. He was provided with letters of introduction from Jefferson, and was received with great eclat, after the departure of the commissioners, the more authentic representatives of our government. He was very coldly received by Washington, on his return, and his mission gave very great offence to the federal party. Congress, soon after, passed an act, prohibiting, under severe penalties, this sort of interference with the foreign diplomacy of the government.

General Heath's memoirs are said to be a strange farrago of egotism and pompous inanity. The wits are hacking the author and his book. He is not a firm subject enough for their dissecting knives.

The General Court is convened, and are not in the humor of falling in with the rage of Virginia. The insult to the American flag, by impressing seamen from the sloop of war Baltimore, rouses all the tongue-valor of Congress. It is indeed too outrageous for that government to avow; and yet the liableness of Britons to serve their king and country will not be abandoned.

I am in better health than I was a year ago, and hope, by great care and a good regimen, to be fit to stay at home and do nothing before your return. Slight deviations from my usual carefulness of diet, &c., still derange my health. Health and fraternity.[1] Yours.

[1] A few extracts from a letter of Mr. Gore to Mr. Ames, dated London, 7th September, 1798, are subjoined.

My Dear Friend,—

The political face of our country is very good. The manner in which the government and people have received the insolent and degrading treatment of the French, has elevated the character of the United States, in the eyes of Europe. It has raised the spirits and confirmed the disposition of those who oppose the monster. It will serve to disgrace the villains who exercise their tyranny over all who are not at actual war with them.

What course France may pursue after knowing what Congress has done, is extremely uncertain. We have French papers to the 31st August inclusive. It was then known that Decatur had taken another French privateer, and had carried her into port. Some time prior to this, as one of their insidious tricks to lull us, the Minister of Marine writes to the different commissioners, that the embargo on American ships had been misconstrued, so as to cause the imprisonment of American seamen, which places the government of France in an hostile attitude against the United States; whereas every thing on the part of the former indicated a pacific disposition, and a discharge is ordered of the seamen.

Logan arrived at Hamburg, had passports, it is said, from Jefferson and McKean, was extremely desirous of reaching Paris before Gerry's departure, in which, however, he did not succeed. The French newspapers say, he is an American envoy. A paper, Le Surveillant, of the 13th Fructidor, (for your information, who, I suppose, are not conversant in the French calendar, that is 30th August,) has the following paragraph, "Le nouvel envoyé Americain, venu a Paris au nom *du parti patriote des Etats Unis*, est le docteur Logan. C'est lui qui a obtenu la levée de l'embargo en faveur de la plupart des bâtimens de sa nation." You will have seen that the United Irishmen have had an accredited minister at Paris, a long time. The raising of the embargo from the vessels is false, in my belief. There is not the smallest paragraph in any of the papers to support the idea, that they have or intend to

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, February 27, 1799.

DEAR SIR, —

. . . . . .

The new embassy to France, however qualified and guarded by the President, disgusts most men here.[1] Peace with France they think an evil, and holding out the hope of it another, as it tends to chill the public fervor. *Inter nos*, I like it little on its outside appearance, yet I believe the President will exact more terms to secure respect, and if a negotiation should be begun, will urge indemnity further than French arrogance and poverty can or will go. What good he sees in it, I know not. I rely on his good judgment as much as I ought, and his patriotism is undoubted. The step,

release the vessels or their cargoes. The letter of the Minister of Marine is dated 8 Fructidor, and only directs the Commissaries of the Ports to put at liberty all Americans, who, in consequence of the embargo of their ships, had been considered prisoners of war. The letter of 30th Prairial, of Citizen Talleyrand to Citizen Gerry, will only serve to increase the indignation of our countrymen against these robbers. The *arrête* for recalling the letters of marque and reprisal from their pirates in the West Indies, and on which they have cracked so much, as demonstrative of their pacific views, probably originated with two views; one of deluding our countrymen, (and yet it is to be hoped, that none can be so weak as to be deceived by so futile a measure,) and the other as a matter of finance, such as by recalling their commissions, and granting them anew, on receiving a certain sum of money. How could Gerry have failed to reply on this subject, that captures were made in the European seas on the like pretences as in the West Indies, and condemned by their courts at the seat of government, and that all the laws authorizing capture of American property still remain in full force and unrepealed? This is still the fact; and some time after the publication of this famous *arrête* that was to be a full satisfaction for their abominable piracies, a question was made in the Councils, whether the terms "growth or manufacture of England." subjected to condemnation vessels and their cargoes which consisted of either, or whether both must be true to render the capture valid. It was determined, as doubtless the law authorized, that having on board articles either of the growth or manufacture, rendered vessel and cargo a good prize. . . . . .

[1] While the quarrel with France was at its height, the President, without consulting or even notifying his Cabinet, astonished all parties by nominating a new Minister to that country. This unexpected *coup d'etat* was a blow from which the federal party did not recover. It produced a schism among the friends of the administration which could not be healed.

however, ought to have been known, if not approved, by the chief officers and supporters of government in Congress, which fame whispers it was not. The *antis* raise their fallen crests upon the news, and promise the renewal of our first love.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, March 12, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — I could make long excuses for my long neglect of writing to you. You have been so very obliging, I will not stand mute on the occasion, though I will not defend myself at full length. The courts have kept me very busy. I have also thought my silence a merit, as I do not think I have a right to impose on you the burden of answering. I am really very thankful for the seeds, and I will give part to some friends, who will attend to their culture, and who keep a gardener. Seeds from a rank democratic soil would not thrive in my garden, but the south of France is, I suppose, far from democratic. Besides, the Aurora would maintain, that they are the seeds of aristocracy which *you* delight to spread.

Had the President acted only half as wonderfully, the defence of his conduct would have been harder to the few who vindicate the nomination of Mr. Murray. The reasons, though weak, might have been accessible, and their weight determined by the scales. But the thing was so totally contrary to his conduct, his speeches, and the expectations of all men, that reasons, though sought for, could not be found, and must therefore be imagined; and when that failed, they must be referred further on to mysteries of state locked up in his cabinet. That even that plea, so paramount to all others, fails in this instance, because negotiation can be vindicated only as the mean to an end — peace with France. The end being a bad one, all means are unwise and indefensible. I could say much on the subject, though nothing that you have not anticipated. Two remarks occur, and there is

consolation in both — that there is some energy in our counsels, for they skilfully parried the measure, and prevented all the bad effects of it, except its disgrace; and secondly, that our nation has some energy, as all men condemn the thing in its appearance; and some put their wits to the task, to fancy that information is possessed by the President, to call for the measure.

Public opinion is the real sovereign of our country, and not a very capricious one neither. France is neither loved nor trusted. War is not desired for its own sake, as it should not be; but peace, as France would give it, is not desired, as it should not be. We begin to feel a little patriotism, and the capture of the *Insurgente* cherishes it. But if the next Congress should be democratic, and the intrigues for the chair of state should proceed with as much heat as internal faction and foreign influence can engender, we shall see trouble. You who watch for us, have a hard task, and if its weight and irksomeness are to be aggravated, by your being ostensibly excluded from participating in advising measures, your magnanimity and sense of duty must be your present reward. Your country will add to it, and so will posterity. I am, dear sir,

Yours, truly.

I hope the President will not doubt that the public is averse to all delusive negotiations. In his answer to the Dedham address, he says — echoing the words of it — "For delaying counsels, the Constitution has not made me responsible; but, while I hold my present place, there shall be no more delusive negotiations." Evidently, our public connects shame with feeble and receding measures. Fortunately our fate has not been always, if ever, at the disposal of our folly. England fights our battles with her own, and the momentum of European politics is imparted to ours, and carries us on, even when we stop, or would go backward.

What I write, you will, of course, consider as strictly confidential. No one respects more sincerely the talents and virtues of our chief, but few know better than I do, the singularities that too frequently discredit his prudence.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Dedham, October 9, 1799.

My Dear Friend, — I have your favor, of the 4th August. In a former letter you invite me to London to recover my health. I should like the trip very much, especially if I had no other object than amusement to command a six or eight months' expatriation. Business, the *res angustæ domi*, and the ties that hold me fast with my family, forbid the idea. My health might profit by it, but does not exact such a step. The proposition deserves two reflections: that I have a friend with the heart to make it; and a heart of my own to estimate its value rightly.

Thank God, I am better. Clients came in at the Dedham August Supreme Court, and overpowered me with application to stakes and stones, and plots of land in ejectment. My mind was not excited with zeal, but my spirits were exhausted by continued attention. The second day of the Court, after a night of disturbed sleep, I fainted at 5, A. M., and was kept from fainting, for three hours, only by water dashed into my face, and volatiles; during all which time I was swimming off into insensibility. That day clients came into my chamber per force; and the next, I went into Court to enjoy the soothing civilities of Judge *Ursa Major* R. T. Paine.[1] I did not die from weariness nor vexation. The next week I went to Boston, and Paine's caresses were continued *per curiam*. The robbery of the Nantucket Bank, charged on the prime men of the Island, employed me five days, and kept me afterwards very low for six more with a cold procured in a court-house, crowded with unusual numbers. I was also hoarse, by four hours' bawling to a jury.

At Dedham Common Pleas, last Tuesday of September, the work was small, and the law laborers many. A writ of right for a pigsty, in which I am for the defendant, continued to April. Old Doctor S. is dead intestate; the heirs

[1] Judge Paine was somewhat deaf, and not at all distinguished for suavity of manners. After an uncomfortable scene in his Court, Mr. Ames said that "no man could get on there, unless he came with a club in one hand and a speaking-trumpet in the other."

have contested the administration, and at length your friend, by consent of all, is the administrator. Thus I am in business, you see, and must demand payment for boluses and pills to the last generation, as well as this. In spite of all these cares, and some relapses, I progress in health, and am now unusually well. It is my time to fatten. I shall enter this winter much better, I really hope, than I did the last. I shall, probably, lose ground about February, be puny again in April, and recruit as formerly in May. It is, however, consoling that my revolutions are not so much in extremes as formerly. I lose less when I decline, and gain more when I advance, than I did last year. What I want is repose; with that, and regimen, I should hope to be as good as any one of the numerous clan of the good-for-nothings. But I see that my cares are not to diminish. Like a stage-horse, I perform my trip by the strength of my oats; but that is pretty sure to founder him at last. The tonic regimen, which I still continue, though in a less degree, is a borrowing of health upon terms of usury.

Excuse my long-winded egotism. What can I fill these long pages with else? I observe every word you write; but politics are forbidden, since our vessels are liable to be prizes. . . . . .

Judge Benson was here in August, and looked ill. Many say he is hyp'd. I fear he is seriously attacked by an old disease of the bowels. Our friend Cabot has been yellow, vertiginous, and wan. We have felt alarms for him. He looks better again, but not so well as I wish.

The crops of corn and potatoes are fine. Cider is dear, and little made this side of Connecticut river, where it is abundant. The Yankees must and will drink more beer than ever; and the breweries in and near Boston will profit by the taste that will supplant cider, in some degree, in future. It is better to look for our drink to our trees than to our ploughs.

My wife forbids my writing further than to offer her very best regards to you and Mrs. G., with those of

Yours, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, October 19, 1799.

DEAR SIR, — I wrote to you, months ago, with great freedom and little discretion, on the subject of the new mission of Envoys. I then endeavored to account for this astonishing measure, on the ground of personal weakness, as I found no reason for it in public principles. If my imprudence has restrained you from making any answer, I will thank you to burn my letter, as it is not proper to be trusted to the chances of falling into other hands. But, while I acknowledge my indiscretion, I will repeat it. I cannot yet compose myself, when I think of the consequences of this error, or notice its existing evil. Federal men already begin to divide upon it. Already the Jacobins raise their disgraced heads from the mire of contempt. Attachment to the person of the President, or to the singleness of the Executive power, is the plea of two different sets of men, once called federal, for palliating (none justify) this miraculous caprice. I hear that the Envoys are not to go at present. But the measure is only suspended, not abandoned; and until it is, the schism among the friends of government cannot be healed. The measure has not even the merit of imposture; — not even plausible vindications of it are offered; — not even the shadow of any good is exhibited. The hatred of Great Britain is to be courted, and excited to do as much mischief and to embroil our affairs, as much as love of France once did: and I own I fear that, while all good men *una voce* condemn the business, the multitude are to be addressed for favor, in a style that will obtain it for a time. France is our foe, and so is Britain. We must depend on ourselves. This is true in a degree, and the inference would be right, if it were not made to sustain a policy that threatens to bring on a war with England, and to revive the Jacobin faction in our bosom. The state of things is very gloomy and embarrassing; and I fear that the good men at helm will feel intolerable disgust, and perhaps meet with it, to induce them to quit their principles or their places. But I hope the opportunity to do

good will be too much valued, to be lost or neglected by them. Two resources occur to my impaired hopes: one, in the real virtue and discernment of the President; the other, in the clear views our public has taken of the policy and character of the French. How the influence on the former can be impressed, so as to soothe, without shocking, his feelings, I know not. I fear it is too difficult and too late. The latter is not to be neglected. Never was there a time when our public ought to be made to see the truth more clearly. Those who seek office, and who court power, will flinch at the meeting of Congress, and the Jacobins will join them. The public is right, and ought to make its good sense and honest zeal intelligible, so that the members, who incline to act right, shall feel incited and supported.

I will disclose to you, that Governor Gill, in his proclamation, had a clause to thank God for this mission of Envoys. This was got out, and our Thanksgiving may be as free as usual from hypocrisy and nonsense. . . . . .

The temporizing, weak federal members of Congress will be tampered with, and I do not see how any thing, but a very strong impression of public sentiment, can prevent a division of the federal party. The despised and the detested already are Jacobins. Any new assortment of our citizens must, of necessity, give that bad cause better men. Perseverance in the first error may embroil the peace of the nation with England, and I greatly fear it will; and if it should, evils within and without will be numberless. But the event will be no less fatal to the peace and reputation of the author of the measure. This will be poor consolation to me, for I wish him honor and permanence in office, as much as any one.

I again request that your discretion to burn this, will supply my want of it. I am, dear sir, with great esteem,

Yours, truly.

I perceive that the Jacobins, and the half federalists, are ripe for attacking the permanent force, as expensive, and unnecessary, and dangerous to liberty. By disbanding the troops, Congress would create many malecontents and disarm authority.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, October 20, 1799.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

From pigs to politics:[1] How do you like the Thanksgiving proclamation? I did not write it. It was, when I first saw it, a Janus, looking sweet at the mission of envoys, and affectedly sour at the French, whom it denominated our foes. This is confidential.

Alas, that mission, though suspended, blasts the character and the hopes of our country. Either it will bring on a war with England, or humiliation to avoid it. It has not even the gloss of an imposture, not even a show of advantage, to cheat with. . . . . There is every thing to excite your wonder, your vexation, and your fears. Take these scraps and place them in order, to make sentences to your liking. The Jacobins will rise in consequence of this blunder. Trouble with them and with Britain will follow. McKean will be Governor of Pennsylvania. It is all the better. Every good man will feel shocked and roused to action, by so scandalous an event. Had Ross been chosen, they would have gone to sleep, expecting him to keep all the wild Irish who vote for McKean in good order. The Feds will have a proper stimulus for the next three years. The things that have happened against our wishes, for the last seven years, have, ultimately, more promoted them than the events called, at the time, prosperous. *Ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito.*

The defeats of the French will do good on both sides the Atlantic. Nothing less than severe, and, I maintain, nothing less than bloody, experience will cure our people of some of their prejudices, and impress some truths that concern our

[1] In the beginning of this letter, he had given some information about his farm.

ace, so that we can get along. We are democrats; we pretend to be republicans. Experience will punish and teach. I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, November 5, 1799.

My Dear Sir, — Your apology for the delay of an answer to a former letter of mine, was not necessary, nor expected by me. It is more than I think my correspondence entitled to. You have much to communicate, both of facts and remarks, and I have little more than complaints and forebodings to give in return.

The mission to France has not been vindicated by even one reason offered to the public. The unfriendliness of Great Britain affords none, as it will aggravate *that*, and provide no resource against it. On the contrary, internal union will be less, and foreign help worse than nothing. It is a measure to *make* dangers, and to nullify resources; to make the navy without object; the army an object of popular terror, — which, for Hamilton's sake, will be artfully prosecuted. Government will be weakened by the friends it loses, and betrayed by those it will gain. It will lose, and it rejects, the friendship of the sense, and worth, and property of the United States, and get in exchange the prejudice, vice, and bankruptcy of the nation: a faction who honor government by their hostility, as that shows it is no patron of their views, not the dupe of their prejudices, not the instrument of their passions. The Jacobins, too, serve the good cause by the violence of their attack, which makes good men enough afraid of their success, to rouse their own energies, and to oppose passion to passion. In this way, as our government is ever in danger of falling by party, it is fated to be saved and to live, if it shall live, by party. Its bane must be its

diet. But this measure threatens to stop its breath suddenly. Our system never could stand alone, and scarcely with holding up; and if the men who hold the property and respect the principles that will protect it, are compelled to even a passive silence, and a desponding neutrality, (and at this moment it requires some virtue to stop there,) the Jacobins will break in, and get possession of the public authority, and, in six months, make the man who holds it their captive, their tool, their trophy. He will not long be permitted to figure even in that under character. The first seat in their synagogue is full, and they will not displace the occupant for another, whose vanity makes him intractable, even with the associates of his own cause, and his own principles; and as he *has* principles, he will, from them and his weakness both, soon become doubly intractable to his new allies. This, they well know; and their friendship, which he seeks for himself, will prove like that of France, which he no less blindly seeks for his country, a snare; not peace, but a sword. They will not prop up his fame, nor his power; and, finally, he will see his mistake, and wish himself back again. Perhaps his return may be possible; and things may demand great sacrifices of feeling and interest to occasions. Therefore, I incline *at present* to think he must be spared, and not driven quite over to the foe. While measures are under discussion, it is proper to paint the probable evils strongly. After they are adopted, it is right to hope for success, that such a hope may inspire wisdom and spirit in the choice of the means of precaution and safety.

I rely on Mr. E.[1] as much as any one can, to watch the foe, and to parry the stroke of her dagger. But the measure is so deadly in its nature, I do not see how even he can do much to preserve us; a treaty ready made, in which nothing is refused, would be hard to evade. Pledges of security for its performance are not to be asked, if exorbitant, and, if moderate, possibly they would not be denied. *I* would require the delivery of ships, or islands, or money, as pledges, so that, in case of a breach of faith, we should start anew with a part of our enemy's force. That, however, I know,

[1] Mr. Ellsworth, one of the envoys.

is chimerical. The spirit that sends Envoys, asks no indemnities.

France is proud, and may find it harder to stoop in her adversity than ever. It may be, too, that the care her rulers may be taking (at the time of negotiating) of their lives and plunder, may spoil the game of their policy. I notice that, in the charges against the ex-Directors, the vile usage of the United States is not an article, though less wrongs done the Cisalpines and Dutch are inserted and exaggerated. This denotes a perseverance in the old system, in regard to us. I do not see how the late measure can be made popular, without promoting that French system. The friendship of that nation must be made to appear worth something in its effects, and worthy of some trust. The fear of British hostility must be magnified in proportion, and it will be easy to make that chimera real. Popular feelings will coöperate with executive acts, and will be resistless *at the beginning*.

No passion should be attacked in its strength; in its ebb, or when some new one runs counter, it may be overcome. Thus I conclude that public discussion would not be discreet at present, farther than to suggest that the mission has its dangers, though it may have wise reasons, yet to be disclosed, for its vindication. The splitting of the friends of government, and the revival of a French faction, are those dangers; and writers may urge, without much alarm to the friends of the President, the mischiefs to be apprehended from both. When the business is more advanced, something lucky may turn up to save us for the hundredth time.

The French may expose some vile trick, that will again exasperate our nation. The treaty may be such, as to afford good grounds of objection. The sense and virtue, and the fears and feelings of the country, may be again brought to act together. In a word, the present moment seems to me to call for this kind of conduct, to keep the public mind excitable, as before mentioned, to a sense of the two dangers; but not to excite it against the late measure, nor its author, till events afford the means and the excuse. Our people really distrust France, but they hate Great Britain; and yet they are vexed that their government does not return us love

for hatred, and show to us the partiality our government, at least, still shows to France, or seems to show.

On the whole, new aspects of affairs present themselves; new parties will arise, and new evils with them. Our citizens are rather democrats than republicans; and nothing short of experience, that cuts the flesh, and dresses the wounds with caustics, will cure the errors of public opinion. The biggest fools we have are our sensible fools, whose theories are more pestilent than popular prejudices. They are more stubborn, are more tinctured with fanaticism, and with the rage of making proselytes. It would greatly improve such theories to dash them strongly with stupidity. Of this sort I reckon the dreams of all the philosophers who think the people angels, rulers devils; information will keep all right, quell riots and rebellions, and save the expense of armies; the people always mean right, and if the government do not oppress, the citizens will not resist; that man is a perfectible animal, and all governments are obstacles to his apotheosis. This nonsense is inhaled with every breath. It gives a bias to the opinions of those who are no philosophers, or who, at least, do not imagine they are such. Errors so deep, so hostile to order, so far out of the reach of all cures, except the killing one of experience, are to be mitigated and palliated by truth, perhaps delayed from exploding for some years. But they will have vent, and then all will shake to the Alleghany ridge.

I have written thus far as fast as I could make my pen go—too fast, perhaps, for my discretion to follow. I confide the letter to your friendship and prudence, not unwilling, however, that Mr. Wolcott should see it, under the like securities. I am, dear sir,

Yours, with perfect regard and esteem.

P. S. While I think it unwise to provoke a discussion of the mission at present, I fear we shall not be allowed to choose our time for it, or to adopt any plan that we may believe suitable to the sad state of affairs. A war with Great Britain will be, somehow or other, begun, and it will then be said, the hostility of that government justifies the step, and glorifies the foresight of the President. The war

might have been avoided. If Great Britain will search our men of war, it is plain she means to understand the temper of our cabinet unfavorably, and to strike the first blow. Our commercial capital will melt away, and perhaps Jefferson and other patriots may see with joy the republican sky cleared of the corrupt vapors and clouds that the northern *funded* and other capital throws up. It will also make the northern States so much the lighter in the scale. Philosophers can enjoy the future good of great evils, and call those changes cheap, that beggar the aristocratic merchants and stockholders, but cannot cost the patriots any thing. British influence Baldwin will see decline, as our wealth takes wing and flies away.

2d P. S. The order of the British king to detain and search our ships of war, as well as the vessels under their convoy, denotes a resolution to go to war with us. If it be so in fact, perhaps, all we have to do is to exert our best force and courage in the war. But, if any alternative be yet left to us, peace with that power is to be sought most earnestly, as all our floating capital would soon fall a sacrifice, and the anti-funding party might rejoice that their northern antagonists were so much the weaker. To hold up a war with Great Britain as a triumph of the Jacobins, as the ruin of commerce, as the source of new evils, new taxes, endless confusion, &c., would be right, in case it is not too late. I have felt restrained, by the sense of propriety, from plainly stating to you the usefulness of some prudent course of conduct being considered by you and Mr. Wolcott, and intimated to some discreet person here. The newspapers are venal, servile, base, and stupid. But they would, for the last reason, publish a good deal very freely, because they would not understand it. I am very deeply distressed and anxious about the state of our affairs. No one would reject desponding and trimming counsels, however, with more disdain than I. This letter being strictly confidential, and the urgency of the occasion being great, I will not scruple to signify my hope that Mr. Cabot, or I, should have such sentiments furnished to us, as the public ought to comprehend. Any very elaborate or detailed

argument, or series of essays, would do less good than light paragraphs and incidental remarks. In that way something, I hope, may yet be done to keep our friends and regain our deserters. I will only add my entreaties that you will excuse my loose method of writing; and be assured that I am greatly honored and obliged by your expressions of friendship and regard.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

November 10th, 1799—Sunday.

DEAR FRIEND, — I wish, by the safe hands of Mr. Paine, to write all that you would wish to read. My last was so stuffed with croakings about the Envoys, that I have left it to Paine, after all, to tell you *viva voce* all that I could write.

Since the Despatches were published, the trimmers among the Jacobins have pretended to be converted. The town of Boston has been so decidedly anti-French, that the Sullivans, and the Winthrops, and the Master Vinals, the leaders of fifties and hundreds, joined the *vox populi*, as it was natural they should; but the captains of thousands, the Honesti, Jarvis, and old S. Adams, remain unchanged.

If any point is really conceded by that party, it is that of a navy, which they admit to be wise and right, perhaps with the sole view of insisting the more on the uselessness and danger of armies, which, besides, can go after rebels by *land*, which ships cannot. In the heart of even the proselytes the same rancor still lurks. The mission is the darling measure of them all. The Jacobins in the vicinity of Boston are as openly bitter as ever, though rather less clamorous, and, on the whole, the *rabies canina* of Jacobinism has gradually spread, of late years, from the cities, where it was confined to docks and mob, to the country. I think it is still spreading silently, and why should it not? All that is base is of course Jacobin, and all that is prejudice, and jealousy, and

rancor, in good hearts, (and even they have a taint of every evil propensity,) is susceptible of their impressions. Envy, fear, and cupidity, will renew the generations of factious men to the world's end. I smile at the shallow hopes expressed in conversation, of talking or writing folly and prejudice down, and of dosing the citizens with *information*, till they cannot take the contagion of faction. As well might we hope, by keeping people on a milk diet, to starve out the contagion of the smallpox.

Our good men feel better towards the government than they talk or reason. They really believe seven eighths of the democratic lying theories invented and propagated to subvert all government. They really think paper constitutions adamantine walls about liberty. Their creed, in short, would damn the government as surely as the passions of the Jacobins. Few men, however, act up to their creed, be it what it may. Our good men, therefore, would act, on occasion, with some spirit and constancy, in support of the good cause, and I cannot but hope that events will, in future, favor our tranquillity, or at least our political liberty and existence, as in times past. We shall profit, though little and slowly, by experience, and when things seem desperate, and a crisis inevitable, we have uniformly profited the most. I own I see not how this blind hope can be realized, but, like S. B., I will try to think that good will come out of evil.

Wolcott and Pickering are certainly most excellent ministers, and if they should not be turned out, or get disgusted and refuse to stay in office, they will moderate evils; they will draw to themselves a share of the confidence of the country. These are reasons for my wishing them to remain — perhaps weak reasons; for, after all, I am half of the mind, that bad measures are the longer persevered in for not being clearly understood by the citizens, and this leads me to doubt whether Ellsworth ought to have been urged to go. He goes reluctantly. Monroe and Burr would have done better, and left the case as plain and intelligible as we could wish to make it. The Envoys do not, we are told, even know to what port they are destined. Their instructions, no doubt, are, to adjust differences, to demand reparation for captures, and to make a treaty to regulate our commercial intercourse.

The last part seems to me like putting up good furniture in a house that is already on fire; if it should burn, we lose our furniture; if it should be put out, the engines will spoil and soak it. As to reparation, I should hope pledges will be asked to secure the performance. Why not tell Monsieur Fiveheads,[1] Give us ships, give us an island in pawn; we trust your rogueships no further than we can see you, and that is too far, unless you are bound hand and foot. But why prattle about the pledges of a treaty with France? It is like Doctor Faustus's league with the Devil — our soul for his services.

The soberest result of my reflections is this — that our people understand the French, but do not understand the English. They do not comprehend the interests or policy of their government any better than its structure or materials. We expect their love and friendship, yet think it a crime to have any for them. We also magnify our own importance, at the very moment we are content to forfeit all pretension to it. For we tamely take kicks and snubs from France, and fancy Great Britain full of terror, lest our cutters should grow up into a rival navy. I do not trust to that, far off as jealousy can look for a rival. With a thousand ships, she is not afraid of us. The monopoly spirit and the rage against France are more obvious and powerful springs of action. Why should we expect that nations will see, or prefer their interests to their passions, when very wise individuals every day make a sacrifice of the former to the latter? We are like the English; the comparison is to be made between us and them, and in *that*, national pride takes an interest and feels a wound. Our envy, hatred, and revenge, naturally point against England, therefore, because we resemble them, and not against France, whom we do not resemble. Like two rival beauties, we are in danger of hating each other, because both are handsome. Which is handsomest, is a question that shoots through every marrow bone, like the pains of the rheumatism. While France had so many partisans, no Frenchman here had many friends. England, on the contrary, was hated, yet every Englishman

[1] The French Directory.

was courted, trusted, and preferred. From our love and hatred of those two nations, we took care, as often as we had opportunity, to make exception of every individual belonging to the one or the other. Soon or late, every strong popular impulse will be felt. Every stubborn national error is a root of bitterness, that tillage will not extirpate. It will appear in such a country as ours, in acts of government. Therefore I conclude that our absurd hatred of Great Britain will produce a war with that nation, and our excessive democracy, a convulsion or revolution.

Really sound and correct sentiments are extremely rare among those who either seek or enjoy any popularity in the United States. That treasure is so fugitive, that the having it breeds avarice and meanness. The fear of losing it, extinguishes bold, independent sentiments, and makes rare truth unwelcome, when it visits them. The plain folks think better, and are less afraid of the truth when they find it. A large part of our yeomanry are nearly *made up* and right in regard to France. Our upper counties are quite so. Among the more enlightened, Chief Justice Dana has been eminently zealous and prompt in his politics. He is not a man whom you delight to honor, because he is crabbed on the bench. Much praise is due to him, however.

The last spring, the new county of Norfolk, (separated, as you know, from Suffolk,) was supposed to be clearly Jacobin. The *antis* resolved to turn out General Thayer, John Read, and a Major Bullard, the senators, because they voted once on the federal side. A single offence was unpardonable, and they started three high Jacobin candidates, with the most elate confidence of success. But I scarcely know how it happened; they failed of majorities for their men, and, as the old senators were supported, from the necessity of the case, by the federal votes, they were on the list of candidates, (there being no choice,) and our federal General Court of course elected the said old members, who now call themselves high federals, and will be rechosen next April.

I have made, at two sittings, a very long *despatch*. I freely own it, that I am rather barren in my communications to you. I find a scarcity of materials. If I could see you, my tongue would run like a mill. I should find sub-

jects supplied by conversation forever and ever. I need not tell you, that you are a friend to whom I am bound by ties not to be severed; and I please myself with believing, that if God, in his mercy, should spare us both to old age, we shall hobble along our downhill path the more cheerfully, for treading it together. When you are to return, you scarcely know yourself. The ill aspect of affairs between the two countries may bring you home the sooner. But as it may create subjects of adjustment, it may detain you. I scarcely wish you to return soon; yet I am not very unwilling to see you again at the bar — dear as your fame and happiness will ever be to me; for I do not believe that will degrade you, or plague you very much after the first six weeks. You would act on a respectable scale, which, in my dictionary, is synonymous with large fees. I sincerely wish, however, that your return to the professional drudgery may be most perfectly optional with you.

God bless you, and Mrs. Gore.

Yours, &c.

TO T. PICKERING.

Dedham, November 23, 1799.

(Private.)

DEAR SIR, — I expressed such thoughts, in my late letter, as occurred to me, in the first moments of my surprise and vexation, on finding the Envoys were actually going. They were crude, and deduced from a very imperfect view of the whole case. I then thought the public had been more prepared by art, and were more strongly impressed by the authority of the President, than I now think. I then thought an indirect plan of self-defence the only one left, to diminish or escape the enormous mischiefs of that fatal measure. I still think, that a direct newspaper discussion is to be postponed. I did not, however, duly consider the probable state of things in Congress. *There*, the public sentiment will spring, as from its proper fountainhead. If the speech should be a menace

to Great Britain, all will be lost, if Congress should echo, or only tacitly acquiesce.

If the President should only state facts, and give a general view of the state of affairs, and of the hopes of the effect of his mission, the question (as) to the proper conduct for federal men to pursue, in framing the *answer*, will be more difficult. I have a little turned my thoughts to the subject, and though it is but a little, I will hastily and unreservedly state them to you.

If this mission is to be a flam, to delude the French with mock friendship, they will, I fear, turn it into serious earnest. The President, I hear, says he has no hope of its success. But why he should calculate on their being so shallow as to refuse the promise of any thing, I cannot see.

It is, apparently, a game too delicate to play with advantage, against any but novices, and these old sinners will certainly beat us at it. My own belief is, that, for certain reasons, the mission proceeds on the ground, that Great Britain is hostile, is too great, and that France and we are to lean to the same side, to make a balance. Though war is not intended, perhaps not foreseen, by the President, yet he is willing to have the multitude, and the Jacobins, give him credit, as no friend to the English, and no well-wisher to the growth of their naval power, or to the depression of their rivals. This is a prodigious merit, and will throw such a glory round any prophet's head, as may well fascinate. He may calculate that this will procure and secure popularity, not only with the multitude, but with the pretended American party, as I have heard he terms those who are not of the French or British parties; all which parties he supposes to exist distinctly.

Now, such opinions and such interests, and the measures in consequence of them, beginning with the envoys, will certainly produce effects, at home and abroad; at home, to embroil and divide; abroad, to irritate and bring on losses and disgraces. If, to the effect of these dispositions and measures on the part of the chief of the government, we should unfortunately have to add what will be produced by the acquiescence, tacit or express, of Congress, and the newspaper assent of the nation, which, as the newspapers now are, will

be expressed loudly in favor of the President and his mission, will not Great Britain banish all doubt of our hostility, and act accordingly? Will not an open war, or an active one, though not declared, but ruinous to our trade, be the certain and speedy consequence? I know some wise folks insist, that she has her hands full, and that we are too good customers to quarrel with. This is plausible, but false. Armed as she is, our hostility would be nothing. With a thousand ships, *her* trade would be safe, and with a thousand privateers, which such a trade as ours would invite to scour the seas, *we* should be stript of nearly our whole commercial capital in one short season. And as to manufactures, we must have them. They would reach us (at) a dear rate, and so scantily as to ensure poverty and nakedness.

I rely on it, that Great Britain is not half so reluctant to go to war as we are, with all our unseasonable bluster. This is her time, and not our time. If we must go to war, and could choose the time, it should be when the world was at peace. Then, if we should demand justice, without menace or insult, I am sure we should obtain it. If not, I would not ask, I would not accept, French aid to fight her, not even if France were sober, and again a monarchy, and had a hundred ships of the line fitted for sea. My reasons are, that, alone, we should have less force to contend with, and more to contend for. Our little navy would not require, and would not produce, the arming of all, nor, perhaps, of a tenth part of the British; our trade would not encourage the equipment of so many English privateers, as ours and the French together, if France was our associate in the war. We, on the contrary, should equip more privateers, as the harvest would not be shared with the cruisers of France. Besides, the British merchant ships would be armed and convoyed with more care, if we had France engaged, than if we stood alone. For these reasons, I do not subscribe to the doctrine, that we ought not to stand alone, nor that any European nation, except Great Britain, and she only in the peculiar existing state of things, could or would prosecute a war against us, after patching up a peace with her nearer and more powerful enemy.

But to return from this long digression. I have endea-

vored to show, that this is the worst time for us, the best for Great Britain, to go to war. Any time would be a bad one, for both countries, and would cost a great sacrifice of interest to passion. But the minister of Great Britain might argue thus: These people hate us, and would fight us, if they dared; with such animosities, they will join our foe as soon, and annoy us, even in peace, as much as possible. Better then choose war; it is our time. We are clad in armor, and invulnerable. The order to their cruisers will be rigorous; spoliation will be augmented, discontents will multiply, the Jacobins, who profit by all ill humors, will speedily triumph, and then we should have open war. Or it may be, open war will happen first, and that would bring on poverty, discontent, faction, and triumphant Jacobinism.

Admitting this progress, (no matter which end it may begin at,) the petty discords among federalists, the small talk among the small politicians, about disrespect to the President, &c., &c., (which, on any other question than that of national life or death I should call important,) I say, these minor considerations lose all weight in the comparison.

If the House, by an express answer disapproving, could prevent the impression on foreign nations, that the mission was the expression of the will of all the branches of our government, the evil might yet be stopped. We might be only disgraced, not ruined — suffer some clamors, lose some federalists, and save our peace, wealth, and government.

But if the House will not speak the true language, I do not see why a few, why even *one* member should not speak it, if a second would not join him. The division of the federalists might be disclosed by such a debate, but it would not be occasioned. The public would rally; the real dangers would strike the real patriots, who now sleep ignorant of them. If Gallatin and Co. should be for the mission, Connecticut, always sound, against it, and the known friends of order and government should join the latter, even yet something might be done. I do not forget that this is a very unwelcome effort, for members to make; that evils would attend its success; that care must be taken to make it really, and in appearance, a correct constitutional and parliamentary step, and that every energy of every enlightened

mind must be put in requisition, to give it effect without doors. I know that those who hate labor, who dread reproach, and even scrutiny, who expect office, and who are enslaved by names, or who want the sense or the spirit to discern the crisis, and of course, to despise little objections, and to surmount even great difficulties, when great duties call for it, — these, and multitudes like these, will flinch, and I fear exceedingly that ill success would attend the effort.

But if it is a case fit, as the Catholics say, for extreme unction, good men are bound to do all they can to save the nation. If they fail in the attempt, the nation will then have to answer for its own undoing. I submit it, therefore, to you, whether every effort ought not to be made in debate, to open the eyes of the people, even if the good men were sure of being in a minority.

Perhaps some equally impressive ground may appear to you and others accessible and tenable. I wish to engage your most mature thoughts, in conjunction with the friends about you, and the friends of the country. Congress ever meets unimpressed, and ready to take a plan of conduct, if well digested and properly recommended, but never ready to frame one for itself.

I am, dear sir, with a grateful sense of your exertions for us all, and with perfect esteem,

Yours, truly.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, January 6, 1800.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

Inter nos. I fear that I shall be asked to deliver an Eulogium on General Washington. I am intriguing to parry this malicious blow of the fates, for I have not time to prepare. I cannot do the thing justice. I should disappoint everybody, and mortify myself intolerably. This is not a modesty trap, but a sad prognostic of the event.

Yours, affectionately.

TO JOHN WARD FENNO, ESQ., PHILADELPHIA.

Dedham, February, 1800.

My Dear Sir, — A friend in Boston had occasionally sent me your Gazette. That, joined to my being engaged in business in Boston, makes me doubtful whether I had received any of your papers, before the two that came with your esteemed favor of the 10th. I value the favor of your Gazette, as I ought. Those who *think*, are not very many, and the world's business, luckily, is not to be done by thinking. All have passions and prejudices, and these are called principles, creeds, virtues. A Gazette, conducted by a man of keen remark, and who dares to publish what he has discernment enough to comprehend, will of course have rivals and slanderers, even among his most clumsy imitators. This distinction, like all preëminence, is fascinating, and requires a variety, and at least a seeming contrariety, of qualities, to wear with grace and manage with advantage. Your father was a rare good man: my heart grows heavy as often as I revive in it the remembrance of his death. My affection for his memory, and my regard for you, would authorize me to set myself up, through one page, as your adviser, if I did not know, that of all rights, those of advisers are the most mistaken and abused. Prudence is thought to be of a mean parentage, and is often in a bad neighborhood, being reputed the offspring of dull feelings and base fears, a sort of jockey virtue, a substitute for both sense and morals. I am, I confess, at length old enough to consider it as the ripe fruit of experience, the just discernment of things as they are, and the condescension to weaknesses and prejudices.

This, I confess, is rather a grave and awkward beginning. It is not designed as the preface to a sermon of reproof. Far from it. Young men, with an honest warmth of heart, despise little condescensions. Yet there is no possibility of getting along in this world among so many little folks and little prejudices, without making a great many. It is impossible to strip off these, as they make up half or nine tenths

of the whole political man. Young men of talents, also, who discern dangers far off, are impatient, that others are dull to see and slow to provide against them. This is your case, and that of the public. Sanguine hopes, of the most ridiculous kind, enable millions to extract comfort from facts that show how fallacious they are. They suffer few ills by anticipation, and reflect little on such as have happened. The mass of the nation are, of course, little affected by theories; not much by any but very great events. They communicate almost no impulse to government, and are open to all strong impressions, either of government or of the faction opposed to it. A few leading ideas are, however, deeply rooted. I hope love of the Union is one, and when the crisis arrives that will oblige them to choose, I flatter myself they will choose right, or at least stand by authority, in support of such a choice.

I admit, however, that things are gloomy enough. I lament the tame and fluctuating spirit that some of our measures indicate. I cannot deny, that many bad consequences are scarcely to be shunned. But, on the whole, I glean a good number of hopes from the same field where my fears grow so rank. The Federal Constitution is at least as correct as public opinion, and as events mend the latter, the former will gain energy. A system that shall thus adapt itself to experience, will be worth a million of Abbe Sieyes's theories. I am not of the opinion that any change or amendment would answer, that the people do not understand in some degree, and feel the want of in a greater, before it is incorporated into our constitution. Gradually, we shall, I hope, adjust our systems to our wants, and our opinions to our systems. At any rate, we must not give up our hold on this Constitution; we must support it; we must, when necessary, amend it, and in your day it may acquire the strength that time and habit, as well as judicious alterations, will supply. These are my leading ideas of the actual state of our affairs, of what is prudence and what is duty. Allow me to proceed frankly with you. You are not obliged to assume the opinions you reprobate. But when they are adopted by great numbers, who cannot or will not reason, they are to be attacked with some caution, if you would

overcome them. They are often insensible to argument, always enraged by contempt. There is scarcely any lesson that may not be taught so as to avoid disgusting. Truth ought to be made popular, if possible. Your Gazette ought to be the vehicle of such lessons, and to make it such, many hands ought to aid your labors. The style of the pieces should never be such as to separate you from the good in disposition, who are slow in understanding. Truths incessantly inculcated are not quite lost upon us, though I own the effect is not very manifest. But less experience will teach us, and we shall be the sooner taught. I should be happy, for your own sake, as well as for the public's, to see your Gazette as correct in taste, style, and sentiment, a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to such as do well, as the Leyden Gazette was formerly. Do not infer, from this mode of expression, that I would censure it. I consider the task too much for any one man to accomplish. The most able friends of the government ought to be your assistants. With such aid, and the maturing of your mind by the advantages of so great early experience, I should hope you would make the success satisfactory to yourself and to us all.

I agree with you, that the turgid bombast of our papers has been abominable. I have heard much of Thomas's eulogium on Turenne, but know not where to find it. I will send you one of my *things*, as soon as printed. To interest people, after their impressions had all grown flat, and to play tricks with pathos, when they had buried their grief, was not to be done; therefore I attempted neither. Simplicity of thought and expression would be merit, and such merit as I would affect. It would be of a novel kind, as the public taste is formed to the Johnsonian method. An oration may, and, indeed, must be raised on stilts, or it will not be raised at all. I thank you for your attentions, and am much obliged to Mr. Dennie for his. My best wishes for the happiness and fame of you both.

Yours, &c.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Boston, March 5, 1800.

DEAR FRIEND, — The Court will break up to-day, after passing several acts, of some value to the State; one for inspecting beef, much wanted, and which will make a great reform in this article; turnpike acts, to bring the produce of Vermont to this market, and which will recover to Boston a large part of the back country, which has for many years gone to New York. A turnpike is granted from the line of Connecticut to the thirty-milestone, on the road west of Dedham and Medfield, and which joins the Connecticut turnpike from Hartford ferry to the aforesaid line, adjoining this State at Douglas. This will divert the cheese, butter, &c., &c., which has gone to Providence more and more, and restore to the South End rum-and-molasses shops, the Jonathans who used to have their sweet communion with them. These regulations will really tend to raise Boston; and if your Middlesex Canal should succeed, the success will be hastened. Do I not write like a patriot? yet I sell neither rum nor molasses.

There is also an act to add two judges to the Supreme Court, any two of the seven to be a quorum in the Province of Maine, any four in Massachusetts proper. Thus there will be two courts distributing justice at the same time, and more courts or terms will be holden. To help the Attorney-General, there is to be a Solicitor-General, who, I suppose, will go one way, Sullivan another. There are to be law terms. I have not read the bill, however.

The nomination of Caleb Strong was by a caucus of seventy-two members of the two branches, and was so published in the gazettes. This was indiscreet. Gerry is the man of the *antis*, and they raise as much clamor as they can about the usurpation of the rights of the people. This makes some impression; and others object to the choice of a man who lives a hundred miles from salt water, whose wife wears blue stockings, and who, with his household, calls hasty pud-

ding luxury. These are childish, tattling objections. Strong is a man of sense and merit, and made and set apart to be a Governor, and, with all his *nolo episcopari* and modesty, the very man to like the great Chair. I think, and so thinks E. H. Robbins, who is firm and true, that he will be chosen by the people. Mr. Gill is also a candidate. All parties propose him as Lieutenant; both parties, Fed and *anti*, seem to decline him as Chief. Great exertions will be made on and before the first Monday in April.

I hope Joe Hall writes at length on General Court affairs. If he should not, my letter will be of some value. The members go home well affected to Government, but I think so many interests combine to make the members more numerous, and to change the sort, that the Jacobins will be stronger in the next House. The mode of choosing electors in this State will be to confirm or alter, and Mr. Adams will be, I think, supported by all the Feds in the United States, and opposed by all the *antis*. This was, perhaps, not expected by either his friends or his foes, but events control the men who think they control *them*. Our parties in Congress seem to regard that approaching election as the only object of attention. We expect a treaty from our Envoys. The common prattle is, we shall not give heed to the promises and lies of France, and yet all, except a dozen persons, hunger and thirst and pray, without ceasing, for a batch of such promises and lies in the form of a treaty. Truxton's battle with a superior French ship, McKean's violence, and the tiresome perseverance of frigid eulogies, shall not add another sheet to my letter. Your friend.

Write, I pray you. I will make compensation, if that could do it, by two letters to one from you.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, August 15, 1800.

My Dear Friend, — We are deeply affected and alarmed by your intelligence, in your favor of the 5th and 6th, from

Springfield. We beg you to keep us exactly informed of the bill of health, especially in your own family, and Mr. H.'s. His J. is a fine hopeful boy, and my heart would bleed for his parents, if they should lose him, which God forbid should be the event. My terrors are always lively, when the diseases of children are prevalent. I resort to such precautions as I think may prevent an irritable state of their stomachs and intestines, without forgetting my utter ignorance of the subject, and that, after all, I must place my trust for their safety in God's good providence. Two children have died here, within a fortnight, of the canker and sore throat, which, Dr. A. says, is *not* the throat distemper. I hope he is right.

. . . . . .

We have had some fine showers, and vegetation revives. I was at Newport last Sunday, where I went on law business, and no showers blessed them. They do not count every vote of their State federal, unless they should change the mode of appointing electors, from districts, to a choice by the legislature. Their Governor will be one by the former mode, and not by the latter, and he would probably vote for Adams and Jefferson. Maryland will not alter its mode; it will be seven federal, three *anti*. South Carolina will be all Adams and Pinckney, if they should get a federal legislature chosen, for which an effort is now making. I fear it will fail; then it will be all Jefferson and Burr. On the whole, Mr. Jefferson will surely be elected, unless all New England will unite for Adams and Pinckney. The friends of the President resolve that it shall not be so. They will not have this union, which if they prevent, they will oust Mr. Adams. This, if not victory, will be revenge, because it will oust, or rather prevent the election of, Pinckney. The Feds, in the South, fully rely on our coöperation faithfully and fairly for both, leaving it, as the Constitution has unfortunately left it, to chance, to decide the issue. If South Carolina should be *anti*, I think Jefferson will stand a chance to be chosen, in spite of the *united* opposition of all the Feds throughout the United States. Indeed, I can make no computation how he should fail. If that State should be federal, as there is some hope, then no federal candidate can be elected without their coöperation. How, then, the Adamites

I can make up a face to charge the Essex junto with opposing Adams, and how they can hope to carry his election against the friends of Pinckney in the South, is to me inconceivable. When they fail, they will charge their failure on the Essex Junto, who recommend union for Adams and Pinckney, and not on the Jacobins, who will bring about the event. Will the General Court meet in the same temper they separated, that is, to combine the federal votes for Adams and Pinckney?

Monday Morning. (Private.)

I should not be surprised if the Feds, at New York or further South, should be so much provoked by the conduct of the Adamites here, as to attack and expose the capricious, strange excesses of temper, language, and conduct, which have so much distinguished the *Great Man*. What would be the effect? Yours.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Dedham, August 26, 1800.

DEAR SIR, — I have communicated your letter by Mr. Coolidge to Mr. Cabot and two or three friends. I have desired him, and he has promised, to write to you on the subject. Since its reception, I have had a long, and profoundly sensible and interesting letter from Mr. Wolcott. The same friends have also considered that, and we all agree in the result.

We understand that, at the close of the late session, the federalists consulted on the measures proper to be taken by the friends of order and true liberty, to keep the chair from being occupied by an enemy of both. This was the principal object, to which all inferior considerations must be made to yield. It was known and allowed that Mr. Adams had conducted strangely and unaccountably, and that his reëlection would be very inauspicious to the United States. But, great as that evil appeared, it was thought indispensably necessary to run the risk of it, and to agree fairly to vote for him and

General Pinckney, because chance might exclude the former, and because any other arrangement would, by dividing the party, inevitably exclude both, and absolutely secure the success of Mr. Jefferson; and because, also, many, perhaps most, of the federalists will believe, it is better to have him, Mr. Adams, again, than Mr. Jefferson. The question being, not what opinion we must have of the candidates, but what conduct we are to pursue, I do not see cause to arraign the policy of the result of that meeting. For, in the first place, it is manifestly impossible to get votes enough for General P. to prevent the choice of Mr. Jefferson, in case he should be supported in open hostility to Mr. A. The sixteen votes of this State, and four of Rhode Island, may be counted as adhering, in all events, to Mr. A. Then why should we ground any plan of conduct on a known impracticability of its execution? By taking that course of open hostility, generous as it may seem, we are at issue with all the federalists who would not join us, and whose vexation and despair would ascribe the certain ill success of the party to us, and not to the Jacobins. They would say *we* make Mr. Jefferson President, and the vindictive friends of Mr. A. would join in the accusation. The federalists would be defeated, which is bad, and disjointed and enraged against one another, which would be worse. Now it seems to me, that the great object of duty and prudence is, to keep the party strong, by its union and spirit. For I see almost no chance of preventing the election of Mr. Jefferson. Pennsylvania will be managed eventually by Governor McKean and Governor Dallas, to throw its whole weight into that scale. The question is not, I fear, how we shall fight, but how we and all federalists shall fall, that we may fall, like Antæus, the stronger for our fall.

It is, I confess, awkward and embarrassing, to act under the constraints that we do. But sincerity will do much to extricate us. Where is the inconsistency of saying, President A. has not our approbation of some of his measures, nor do we desire his reëlection: but many federalists do, and the only chance to prevent the triumph of the Jacobins, is to unite, and vote according to the compromise made at Philadelphia, for the *two* candidates? That this gives an equal chance, and a better than we would freely give to one of

them. But, strong as our objections are, and strongly as we could, and are willing to, urge them to the public, we refrain, because the effect of urging them would be to split the federalists, and absolutely to insure Mr. Jefferson's success. That, however, if the rancorous and absurd attacks of Mr. A.'s personal friends, and the meditated intrigues with our legislature, should make it necessary, we shall not fail to prevent the effect of that compromise which they thus abuse, and turn against the avowed design of those who made it; and that we shall not sit still, but resort to such measures as they will render necessary. That this compromise not only exhibits the condescension and pliancy of Mr. A.'s opposers, but is the only good basis of the success of either Mr. A.'s or General P.'s friends in the event, as it engages beforehand for the acquiescence of the disappointed part of the federalists, and also as it is the only step that can unite them to oppose the election of a Jacobin, and, in that sad event, that can keep them united as a party, without whose union, oppression and revolution will ensue.

Where is the absurdity or inconsistency of this language? It is, besides, that which we have held for some time, and it is difficult now to change it.

I am therefore clear, that *you* ought not, with your name, nor, if practicable, in any way that will be traced to *you*, to execute your purpose of exposing the reasons for a change of the Executive. But a strong appeal to the sense and principles of the real federalists would not, or need not, contradict or discredit the language above stated. I have tried to compress as much as I can into one sheet. But I have much more I wish to suggest to you. I have no occasion to say how much I respect your judgment, but I exceedingly desire to discuss with you the point of the changes which the Jacobins may force the nation to make, in the plan of the government.[1] Yours, truly.

[1] It is proper to say that the above is printed from a copy, and that the Editor only conjectures, from the evidence of its contents, that it was addressed to Hamilton.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Boston, August 29, 1800.—Friday.

My Dear Friend,—

. . . . . .

The *antis* rise in hopes and insolence, on the bad result of the Essex election, and that still worse in Worcester. A bad House of Representatives, and a Jacobin President, would be too much.

Mr. Adams's friends do not know, but they ought to know, that the loss of any federal votes will certainly prevent his election; that the only ground on which they can or ought to expect them, is the *agreement* made at Philadelphia, honorably and fairly to run General Pinckney with Mr. Adams, and that, if they show an intention to fall from that agreement, Mr. Adams will have no federal votes in Jersey, Delaware, or Carolina. Whether the labor I have been at to display this consequence to *some* of them, will stop the current of their rash and silly newspaper eloquence, I know not. *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*

Yours.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Dear Sir,—The situation we are in, though not unexpected by a few, has filled the public with equal surprise and terror. The votes, Rhode Island excepted, have been given in a manner to take away that sort of reproach from the *Hamiltonians*, that momentary interests and the petulance of disappointment would otherwise have naturally thrown upon us. I discern symptoms of general wish to pass an act of oblivion, and to unite in self-defence against oppression, the danger of which folly persisted in refusing to discover, so long as there was, in reference to the election, any utility in thinking right, and acting together.

While we had a real or reputed federal head, weak men could see no danger, except in over federalism. Supposing the government to have, intrinsically, ample means of self-defence, and it being in federal hands, all, they thought, was safe, unless the men in power should govern too much and carry things too far. True patriots ought to lean against the administration, according to their opinions and feelings. This political hypercriticism is soothing to the weak, who happen to be vain, and are not yet found out, or do not know that they are. It passes for independence of spirit, for superior sense and virtue. This sort of vanity makes bad federalists as well as many democrats; it has inspirited the assault, and dispirited the defence, of the cause. It is only at times when people are very heartily afraid of their adversary, that they are well united to their party. That time has come: and all the talent, patriotism, and worth, and weight of character, in the country, ought now to be in requisition to save it. You are no stranger to my just estimate of the importance of your services and talents, and of the like importance of the country's relying on them and claiming them. I will not say that you could have delayed or suppressed your book, or that its ultimate effects will not be salutary. But, though I think it one of your best written performances, there existed more unlucky momentary causes to make it unacceptable to federal men, than any thing you ever wrote. In political affairs, few speak so much from respect for truth as for *stage effect*. In the sphere of politics,

"All would be gods and rush into the skies."

The disclosure of truth implies previous ignorance. Few dwell on faults that they do not claim to have discovered, and those they exaggerate. Your book told less than *we* knew, because you would not charge, I suppose, more than you could prove. It told more than others would admit they had to learn, and especially those who extol the man who is the subject of your writing. Yet it is amusing to hear many begin thus: Mr. Adams has his faults, we know; then conceding ten or twenty, such as are fatal to his political reputation, — yet why should General H. come out now with his pamphlet, to divide and distract the federal

councils? It was insidious, unfair, and deeply, rancorously hostile. You well know there is no such thing as persuading people to believe or doubt, against their inclinations. It has, therefore, been the opinion of your friends, that the facts stated must be left to operate on the public mind; and that the rage of those whom they wound, will give them currency. At no very distant day, every right impression will be made; and it is not clear that it would be made the sooner for our sustaining, in the *newspapers*, the results that ought to be drawn from your facts. In conversation, we have been explicit enough, and our legislature was pretty extensively impressed with our sentiments. Mr. Cabot and I would readily say or write any proper thing in vindication of your character, if it were necessary. But we justly deem it superior to the prejudices against you, which have been spread with much art and some success. You know the cause and most of the pretexts. The Jacobins admit that you are their most dreaded adversary, and they greatly enjoy it, that the station unanimously assigned to you by your enemies, should torment and distract *their* enemies. These, however, are, I trust and hope, only temporary prejudices, which, with their author and the occasion, are already on the wane.

It is exceedingly important that the federalists should unite. The soundness of their councils, and their success in impressing the public, will probably depend upon you as much in future as in time past.[1]

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, December 27, 1800.

My Dear Friend, — It is a long time since I had a letter from you, or have deserved one by writing myself. Silence is a bad habit, as our wives would concur with us in

[1] This letter is taken from a sheet marked "Copy of my letter." It is apparently incomplete.

saying; let us, therefore, mutually try to amend of that fault, at least. I wish I could amend of a still greater fault, my own *delicacy* of constitution, as the ladies denominate the case. By going to Boston in a sleigh when there was snow, I was chilled through, like a chicken that falls out of the nest, and peeps all night unbrooded; sneezed and snuffled, kept house and drank camomile tea for a week, and did *not* faint, though I came near it daily.

. . . . . .

Our General Court has, and merits, the praise of well doing; and due care ought to be taken to prevent the sons of Belial from turning the good men out next spring. It will be attempted; and probably, nay, certainly, Governor Strong will be violently assailed. Hampshire must do as well as it has done. . . . . .

The canker-rash has not disappeared from this place. Several persons complain of very bad sore throats. The weather is mild since Jefferson was elected; but it is an unwholesome and treacherous softness, that seizes the windpipe like an assassin. Storms will succeed, and find us relaxed. Is not this an emblem of the smooth hypocrisy with which his reign will begin, as well as of its inevitable rigor and agitation?

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

December 29, 1800.

My Dear Friend, — You will hear, with surprise and grief, the event of the election. While evils are in prospect, it is right to aggravate their magnitude and our apprehensions; after they are arrived, to make the best of them. Bad is the best. At the distance you are placed from the scene and the actors here, you will be ready to find more fault with us than you would had you been here. One, at least, of your correspondents has his reasons for thinking *we* were unconciliating and violent. The truth is, we were assaulted, rashly and unaccountably, by the head of the

party, and we stood in our own defence with as much temper, forecast, and spirit, as men could. Scarcely any political transaction has seemed to me, on a retrospect, so little liable to the reproach of bad play. Judge whether the utter ruin of the federal cause, and of all federalists, was not in train, when the accusations against them were such as you heard with your own ears. He now denies it all; and a young man, his secretary, told General Marshall, he was *authorized* to deny it. This was in reply to what General M. said, that the hardest thing for federalists to bear was the charge of British influence. You will make your own comments on the contradiction. How he will act in his retirement, whether he will approve attacks on the muck heap of finance, on the impostures and swindling of banks; whether he will recommend paper money, and a war with Great Britain; whether he will permit himself to be made Governor, or nominated as minister to France or Great Britain, you may amuse yourself with conjecturing. The plan of jointly and equally supporting Adams and Pinckney, met with all the opposition from him and his personal friends, and from the Commercial Gazette, that could be made, and with all the virulence that could give an edge to their passions. Now it appears that South Carolina would willingly have voted for Jefferson and Pinckney; but General and Major P., with singular good faith and honor, adhered to the compact, and rejected the offer. This forms a strong contrast with the conduct of Rhode Island, where, it is believed, *two* votes were thrown away from P. Such a fact will discredit New England; will check any future alliances with South Carolina; will tend to make Rhode Island separate itself from federalism, especially as Governor Fenner is *anti*, and the *novus ordo seclôrum* will augment jacobin propensities. The folly, levity, and bad faith of the two electors, who thus threw away their votes, are now conspicuous. For had not the honor and probity of the Pinckneys prevented the vote of South Carolina from being as above, Pinckney and Jefferson would have been equal, 73 and 73, and Congress would make P. President.

The excellent conduct of the Pinckneys will be long and warmly applauded in New England, and, I hope, make the

basis of true federalism broader than ever. While the eastern States have grown worse, I verily believe the southern have grown better, and even the *antis* here feel a little sore that the eastern States have lost the Presidency. To support and commend even Jefferson, will be against their old malecontent habits and feelings. It remains also to be seen, whether, if Burr and Jefferson are equal, the former will not be preferred by Congress. It is the subject of discourse. It is said he is preferable, has the more energy of the two, and will keep the government together, if he can wield it. I consider it, however, as bravado, and that the Feds will not contest, if the equality of the votes should furnish the occasion, Jefferson's presidency. Madison is agreed on as Secretary of State among the *antis*. But other places are said to be undecided on. Gallatin pants for Wolcott's place, now or soon to be vacant. Stoddert will go out, and, probably enough, the navy and the department be abolished together. Dexter is not expected to quit *voluntarily*, and I think he will not be turned out. Monroe will, if he likes, return to France to embrace liberty again. To go on as formerly in measures, will not suit many of the dominant faction; the anarchists and Jacobins want the government to whirl like a top; the *antis* would amend it to death; the *democrats* would get on by temporizing and coaxing. Jefferson and Madison are, probably, of the latter. The four sorts are now melted together, and seem to be homogeneous; but, as the metal cools, I think all the four ingredients will, in some degree, separate, and appear distinctly. The Lord knows how the interior will be; and the exterior relations will be bad, or we shall try to make them bad.

Formerly, pretty good men thought the government party was rather too violent, and fond of governing too much. It seemed to such blinkers a duty to lean back from the government, and to lend a little countenance to the opposition. Now, the same jockeys will fear the new administration. They will fear for the safety of property and government, and have reason. If these should be attacked, the spirit of the new opposition will be undivided aud energetic; and it is very possible that we may find ourselves fitter and more

united for the work than for sustaining, as heretofore, the men and measures of our choice. All fears now will be for the safety of all that government has yet erected. Stocks have fallen, and rich men have begun to find out that they ought to bestir themselves. The late discord among federalists will probably subside. The occasion for a civil war between us is past, and there is discretion enough to hold our tongues. We see, however, that much of Jefferson's work is ready done to his hand. We are, by treaty, to embrace France, and Frenchmen will swarm in our porridge-pots. Jefferson will say he only supports the friendly system of his predecessor. Had he found things as they were in 1798, it would have been a great and palpable innovation to bring them to the point where he finds them. The federalists are already stigmatized as an oligarchy, a British faction. Hamilton is obnoxious and persecuted by popular clamors, in which federalists, to their shame, join. A war with Great Britain is said to be a cowardly fear, and quite improbable; no matter if it happens. Banks, funding systems, are muck; paper money, a good revolutionary resource; Hancock and Adams forever! These are great advantages for the new administration to start with. Perhaps they are such as pretty naturally flowed from the dominancy of the federal party in 1798. Then they were very strong; and is it not the nature of every party to split, as soon as it becomes greatly superior to its antagonist? On that hypothesis, we may, perhaps, soon profit by the discord of the Jacobins. It is clear that some of them want *no* government, and are anarchists. Some plot for a revolutionary Robespierrism; they are Jacobins, thirsting for blood and plunder. The antifederalists prefer state aristocracies *allied*, not bound closely together. The democrats would trust to the rights of man and chopping logic. Locke and Paine are authorities to direct and enlighten us, and that is all that *citizens* need. Eustis[1] will have a difficult game to play. If he spiritedly supports revenue, navy, and credit, what becomes of Jacobinism? — If he joins in demolishing them, what becomes of his Boston support? On the whole, I hope that, as the elements

[1] Representative in Congress from Boston.

of the new administration are discordant, they will feel their weakness; and that, when federalists have nothing to do but to *defend*, they will feel and make manifest their strength. I trust they will do it very differently from the Jacobins, and as patriots and good men should. The Palladium, or Massachusetts Mercury, is to be the federal gazette. I pray you send me sometimes pamphlets or papers, to give me just ideas of European politics.

Yours.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, January 1, 1801.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

They talk strongly of preferring Burr to Jefferson. It is said the Feds can decide which shall reign. The Mercury or Palladium is to be the federal paper, and pains must be taken to spread it, and gain readers and patrons in all parts of New England. It languishes hitherto for pecuniary funds. But literary help will be considerable in the beginning, and unless (this in confidence) K., J. L., and F. A., will work for it, the tug will soon become hard. One of the three is very lazy; but as he can and will write when he is, and because he is, there is a chance he will yawn over pieces that will set the readers yawning. All well here.

Yours, with love to friends, &c.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER.

Dedham, February 9, 1801. — (Private.)

Dear Sir, — You have a difficult task to perform on the 11th,[1] and though I hesitate and am undecided in a degree

[1] At this period the Constitution required that each presidential elector should vote for two persons, without designating which should be President,

that is not, I think, often my custom in political matters, I leave all to the Feds, who, on the spot, will act for the best. I doubt whether Burr will be federal, if chosen by Feds, and he would reconcile himself to his old friends as soon as he can. You will, I fear, become weary of well-doing in Congress, and resolve to quit your post sooner than we shall be willing to release you from it. Will Dexter be allowed to hold *his*, or the office of State, if royal grace should remove him to it? Will Madison go to France if Jeff. reigns? Will Gallatin get an office? Will Jeff. forget or forgive your efforts to bring in Burr, if they should fail of success? Will resentment, or the sense of increased dependence on his party, precipitate him to adopt violent counsels, to attack the funds, to restrict British commerce, to hug France close, &c.? It is very important that the Feds should adopt some *plan* of conduct, suited to the state we shall soon be placed in. We must keep united, and keep the public with us. Great efforts will be made to jacobinize Massachusetts, and to elect Gerry, though many think Mr. A. will be the jacobin candidate. The members of the General Court will go home full of zeal to reëlect Strong. The Jacobins are full of confidence that they shall triumph in Boston, and throughout the State. Accept my best wishes. Yours, truly.

TO JEREMIAH SMITH.

Dedham, February 16, 1801.

My Good Friend,— It is bold in you, sinner as you are, to ask any thing of me. You did not answer my letter about

and which should be Vice-President. The person having the largest number of electoral votes was to be President, and the one having the next largest was to be Vice-President. At this time there was a tie between Jefferson and Burr, each having seventy-three votes, and the decision between them devolved upon the House of Representatives, voting by States. The balloting began on the 11th of February, 1801, and was protracted to the 17th of that month.

writing to Ben Bourne, nor a former letter, nor those letters I did not write, but which you knew I had regard enough for you to write. I have your Judge letter; — and with all these demerits unatoned, I wrote for you to Dexter, requesting him to show it to Marshall, and to do all that he can possibly do for you. I heap coals of fire on your unworthy head. But I will not allow my rage to proceed any further; on the contrary, thank you for early asking my influence, which, as one of the Essex Junto, you know is great, in favor of your appointment. I did not write to Mr. Adams, which piece of neglect he will excuse, and I hope you will. I have read, and I admire, his book. And if you will write a great book on tenures, as you promised, I will buy it, and, if possible, read it. I am your friend, and will exert myself, you see, to serve you. Seriously, I wish you a Judge, though you have not gravity. I wish to see you, to give you pudding in my house, and to tell you, with the warmth of feeling of 1796, that I am, Court sitting, very busy,

Your friend, &c.

TO THEODORE DWIGHT.

Dedham, March 19, 1801.

Sir, — There are many federalists who think that nothing can be done, and others who think it is *too soon* to do any thing, to prevent the subversion of property and right of every kind. Some even say that Mr. Jefferson will be a federalist, and, of course, there is no need that any thing should be done. As I happen to entertain a very different opinion on all these three points, I ask leave to state, as briefly as I must in a letter, my sentiments to you. I will crowd the paper that I may do it the more fully. I conceive that the Virginia politics are violent, according to the temper of her Taylors, Monroes, and Gileses, and I may add Jeffersons. They are vindictive, because that State owes much, and the com-

mercial States have gained, and now possess, much; and this newly accumulated moneyed interest, so corrupt and corrupting, is considered a rival interest, that baffles Virginia in her claim of ruling the public counsels. The *great* State has the ambition to be the *great nation.* Philosophism and Jacobinism add vigor to the passions that spring from the sources before mentioned. As political power is to be wholly in their hands; as even the senate will apparently be jacobin; and as the popular current is setting in favor of the extremest use of this power, — it seems strange that any federalist of good sense can see matter of consolation in the prospect before us.

Party is an association of honest men for honest purposes, and, when the State falls into bad hands, is the only efficient defence; a champion who never flinches, a watchman who never sleeps. But the federalists are scarcely associated. Their confidence is so blind, and they are yet acted upon so little by their fears, their trust in the *sinless* perfection of a democracy is so entire, that perhaps suffering severely is the only mode for teaching. Others, who foresee and foretell the danger, must suffer with them. Is it not, therefore, proper, and indispensably necessary, to be active, in order to prevent the dissolution of the feeble ties by which the federal party is held together? Is it not practicable to rouse a part of the good men, and to stay the contagion of Jacobinism within, at least, its present ample limits? It would be wrong to assail the new administration with invective. Even when bad measures occur, much temperance will be requisite. To encourage Mr. Jefferson to act right, and to aid him against his violent jacobin adherents, we must make it manifest that we act on principle, and that we are deeply alarmed for the public good; that we are identified with the public. We must speak in the name and with the voice of the good and the wise, the lovers of liberty and the owners of property. By early impressing the preciousness, if I may use the word, of certain principles, and of the credit, commerce, and arts, that depend on adhering to them, and by pointing out the utter ruin of the commercial States by a Virginia or democratic system, may we not consolidate the federalists, and check the licentiousness of the jacobin administration? I

I do not believe that the eastern States, if roused effectually, would be assailed in their great interests; I believe as little that if they are suffered to sleep supinely, confiding, instead of watching, they will escape ruin. Smooth promises, and a tinsel called conciliation, are to be used to break their coherence, to invite deserters from their corps, and, after thinning their ranks, the breach of those promises would be safe. Violence would enjoy impunity. It will be too late to alarm after the contagious principles of Jacobinism have made New England as rotten as Pennsylvania.

The newspapers are an overmatch for any government. They will first overawe and then usurp it. This has been done; and the Jacobins owe their triumph to the unceasing use of this engine; not so much to skill in the use of it, as by repetition. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.* We must use, but honestly, and without lying, an engine that wit and good sense would make powerful and safe. To this end, the talents of Connecticut must be put in requisition. The Palladium might be made a great auxiliary to true liberty, and the endangered cause of good order. Its circulation, however, must be greatly increased. Any paper, to be useful at this crisis, must spread ten times as much as any will or can, unless the federal party, by a common concert, join to make it, like the London Gazette, *the* Gazette of the party. Could not your clergy, your legislators, your good men, be impressed with the zeal to diffuse it at once through your State? The attempt is making here; but, I confess, many think it a folly to be alarmed. Many others are alarmed. An active spirit must be roused in every town to check the incessant proselytizing arts of the Jacobins, who will soon or late subvert Connecticut, as surely as other States, unless resisted with a spirit as ardent as their own. If such a spirit could be roused, we should certainly preserve all that we have not yet lost. We should save property, credit, and commerce. We should, I am sanguine enough to believe, throw upon our antagonists the burdens of supporting and vindicating government, and enjoy their late advantages of finding fault, which popular prejudice is ever prone to listen to. We should soon stand on high ground, and be ready to resume the reins of government with advantage. You will

suppose that I still bear in mind, that we are not to revile or abuse magistrates, or lie even for a good cause. We must act as good citizens, using only truth, and argument, and zeal to impress them.

The success of this design depends on the diffusion of like ideas among all the federalists, and the exertion of the first talents of the party. I think myself entitled to call upon you, and to ask you to call upon the mighty Trumbull, who must not slumber, like Achilles in his tent, while the camp is in danger of being forced. Mr. Wolcott must be summoned to give his counsels, as well as to mend his excellent pen. Connecticut is the lifeguard of liberty and federalism. I am trying to sound the tocsin. Mr. Dutton, the editor of the Palladium, has talents, learning, and taste; what is no less essential, he has discretion. It is intended that every clergyman in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont shall have a paper one year by a subscription.

I write as much, in confidence, to you as the nature of the subject requires. I am, sir, with great respect, &c.

Yours.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, April 28, 1801.

My Dear Friend,—

. . . . . .

I am very glad you are Senator once more, first for my own sake, as I shall see you the sooner and the longer; next for the public's. If we can stave off the evil for a year, we shall rise again — New York may vote right. Massachusetts may appear as well in the next General Court as ever. A less number, more sensible of the danger, more vigilant and spirited to repel it, will be a gainful substitute for a large majority, trusting where no trust ought to be placed. If from New Jersey eastward, all should look federal, a correspondent of mine observes, Jefferson

will stand in his place, a monument of despair — popular without power, the head of the Virginia body, which is languid and impotent. Virginia is a giant in a palsy; when you would lift him he is more than your load; when you would assail him, he is less than your match.

Your friend.

. . . . . .

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, December 7, 1801.

My Dear Friend, —

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The great evil of our school law is, that the towns, when unwilling to maintain schools, may render themselves unable by splitting up their districts. . . . . Pray take the matter into your senatorial consideration, and your petitioner as in duty bound, shall &c.; which is, ever vote for your honor as long as you live, and longer. It is strange, that with my thoughts so turned to legislation, I cannot be chosen; but the people know no better than to neglect me.

I divide my cares for my country with those for my farm, and I have the pleasure to inform you that I carried my pigs to a good market, the peace notwithstanding. Ten cents a pound in September indemnified me for all the grain consumed for my horse, oxen, cows, calves, poultry and family, and a handsome balance in cash. I make no secret of the way to get rich. If corn could be bought on the river to advantage, I would wish to place cash in your hands for the purpose. I have more than sixty pigs, who are pretty expensive boarders. My cows produce only in butter and calves nearly thirty-six dollars each. Keep that to yourself till the valuation is settled. To be serious, I think my farm is approaching the period when it will be profitable. If I did not think it would be, it would not be an amusement. It would be a mere piece of ostentation on any other prospect — an expensive folly, a toilsome disappoint-

ment. The peace will reduce labor and produce and lands. Its effects are not to be foreseen, and on the whole, I incline to believe, though I scarcely know why, they are overrated.

France will be busy with her intrigues in all countries. She has made peace as a conqueror, and annexed to her empire a great territory. Her arrogance will be great, and I suppose that the British minister, seeing (that) Europe, so far from being willing to combine and fight against France, was not willing to let Great Britain fight alone and save them all; that Russia, Prussia, and the Emperor were more or less jealous of the naval greatness of England, and not enough jealous of the Roman greatness of France; I say, I suppose that he was willing, and almost forced, to make a peace, — and such a peace, as by exhibiting and augmenting the arrogance of France, would rouse a jealousy of her in all Europe. The territory ceded was not of much value to keep, not worth the impression supposed upon all other nations. The schemes of Russia, and the discords in France will be probably the points on which the question of the peace lasting or not lasting will turn. As weatherwise folks tell you on being asked of the weather, I will let you know more hereafter.

Yours &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, April 16, 1802.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

Our politics go swimmingly, as there is need they should, for the angels of destruction at Washington are making haste, as if they knew their time is short. It is now their part to vindicate, and stand on their defence when attacked; a post hard to keep, and yet they must keep it, or part with their power. Like the first National Assembly, they or two thirds of their gang have been silly enough to suppose

they could go on with the Constitution by the will of the people — that is, by indulging their own passions. The French from 1789 to 1792 in like manner established a democracy of the wildest and wickedest sort, and thought they could have a king at the head of it. A monarchical mobocracy was their philosophical plan. It answered just as we might expect from joining contradictions together. A like issue must attend our Democrats, and the next thing will be, as in France, anarchy, then Jacobinism organized with energy enough to plunder and shed blood. The only chance of safety lies in the revival of the energy of the federalists, who alone will or can preserve liberty, property or Constitution. This revival is most encouragingly indicated by the late election. It is a victory which we ought to reap the fruits of. We ought to exert ourselves throughout New England to counteract the Jacobins, by understanding what their topics of declamation are, and then confuting them in the newspapers, in pamphlets and discourse.

. . . . . .

Your affectionate friend.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Dedham, October 5, 1802.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

Since I have sought pleasure and profit among my trees and cows and pigs, and since the cares of a little law business and a large family have engrossed my time and thoughts, I am no longer so desperate a scribbler to my friends as I was while in Congress. Then I gave you little respite. I confess that I find an increasing indisposition to letter-writing, which I regret and will resist. Besides you read the Boston papers, and I cast about to find matter not taken up in them; and, uncertain what you know and what you are ignorant of, I write under the discouragement that

I give you nothing but what is stale. Your reproof that I write you too seldom and too short, is flattering yet painful, and the sensibility, with which your letter of the 29th July bemoans your apprehended estrangement from country and friends, is conveyed in a manner very much to sharpen my remorse that I have given you occasion, as I confess I have, for your regrets and remonstrances. I promise reformation. Repentance is strongest while it is new and fresh, and I will avail myself of its earliest impulse to write a letter as long and as lively as any thing ever written, and *not* for publication — excepting only General Heath's orders when he detached a party. In that case the commander of the detachment seldom found the task to be performed so laborious, as the reading of a quire of instructions. I pray you do not interpret this engagement of mine to write a great deal, as a threat. For I have something to add that I would not intimidate you from reading.

You ask my advice about your resuming the law business. I cheerfully undertake the office, only premising that in deciding the most momentous concerns of life, a man is not only his best, but almost solely, his own adviser. He has exclusively that instinctive perception of what he prefers, and of what he can do, that the most discerning friend must only suppose, and may, and indeed must, in a great measure mistake. Nevertheless, friends ought to advise, because they bring this power of *self* judging into operation *precisely*, and with ample materials. All I will pretend to do is to frame a special verdict, and then humbly submit it to your honor's judgment.

Great law knowledge is sure to gain business and emolument. The splendid eloquence that displays its treasures may hasten the popular judgment to decide that a man possesses them, but ultimately the learning of the lawyer decides the measure of his fame. Now, I pronounce that you are well fitted by nature and study, as well as practice for such eminence, and by a practice that evinces your extensive learning and sound judgment as a lawyer, I cannot conceive that you will submit to an unfavorable test of character, or that you will be degraded from the place your friends wish to see you take.

I will therefore assume it as a point proved, that by practice in great causes, and where law learning will be chiefly sought for, you will not impair the dignity of your standing by resorting to the bar. But you will reply, that by returning to open shop you cannot choose your customers, nor refuse to sell ordinary wares; — to harangue a jury about the flogging given to a sailor, or to mingle in the snipsnap war about admitting a witness or a deposition, will often vex and humble the liberal mind; — business of small value will not lie in your way. I reply, your share will be made up by insurance cases, and questions which our bankrupt law is sowing for the harvest of 1804. I observe that the little contests and litigations are engrossed by the junior class of the profession and by those who never advance beyond mediocrity. This is, I think, a different position of things from what existed in 1786. You will not calculate on the small fees, nor the vexatious litigation which concern sixpenny interests and sixpenny passions. Mr. Parsons practises on this large scale that I recommend; and I will add, fees are infinitely better than they were in 1786.

Who are the rivals for this business with whom you must divide the booty? Parsons stands first, but he is growing older, less industrious, and wealth, or the hypo, may stop his practice. Otis is eager in the chase of fame and wealth, and, with a great deal of eloquence, is really a good lawyer, and improving. He however sighs for political office — he knows not what; and he will file off the moment an opportunity offers.

Dexter is very able, and will be an Ajax at the bar as long as he stays. You know, however, that his aversion to reading and to practice are avowed, and I believe sincere. His head aches on reading a few hours, and if he did not love money very well, he would not pursue the law. Sullivan, who seems immortal, is admonished of his decay by a fit every three months, and will not be in your way.

I, your humble servant, never was qualified by nature or inclination for the bar, and this I always well knew. Want of health, and the possession of a small competence will stop my mouth, if fate should not stop my breath before your return. I have reckoned all the persons who pretend

to be considerable. John Lowell's health is wretched. . . . A number of eminent lawyers will be wanted in Boston, and though the place is overstocked, I think the prospect for 1804 not unhopeful. I know of no very dashing young men coming forward.

Yet truth requires that I should, after all, state my expectation, that your share of the business will not be as great as it would have been if you had not left the country. It takes time to form connections and to resume the old set of clients. You are no chicken, and ought not to calculate on a very long period of drudgery at the bar. You will, and you ought to, enjoy the *otium cum amicis et libris et dignitate*, for many years before you die. I will not conceal from you my opinion, that you ought not to expect, or to take into your plan, the receipt of a great many great bags of money from your practice. I do not found this moderate calculation on your want of merit and talent, or on the refusal of the public to admit your title to both; I only insist that, from circumstances connected with you, with rivals in practice, and with the state of business, you are not to look for a very large income.

Suppose, however, instead of six, eight or ten thousand dollars a year, which Hamilton and some others are said to derive from practice, you get only fifteen hundred or two thousand dollars, ought you to decline practice on that account, or to feel mortified, as if the public had rejected and degraded you? I am interested to insist that this estimate of reputation is not fair, for I am not entitled to boast of a lucrative practice. The truth is, other considerations deserve weight, and the public will give it to them.

To be engaged on great law points, and to acquit yourself as you will, surely cannot fail to vindicate you with everybody. Your time of life, your reputation, property, and moderation as to the passion for gain, will be assigned as reasons, even before you can assign them yourself, for your declining the toil of promiscuous business. It will be said, you would not be idle, nor will you be a drudge. This line of practice, the only one in your choice, will shelter you from the ungentlemanly wrangles of the bar, and the Court have of late years set about learning some manners.

Then the question is fairly before you, whether you will open your shop on such terms, and with such prospects as I have stated. Why not? I ask. You will, or some friends rather of yours will reply, why should Mr. Gore descend to this not very respectable, not very comfortable, not very lucrative fagging at the bar? I urge that it is better to keep up your style of living by some business, than to change it for an idle life, and a style observably lower than that you have been accustomed to. A man may make some retrenchments and savings, but he cannot greatly alter his expense without *descending*, which I should be sorry you should have forced upon you. A man may not incline to take a certain degree on the scale of genteel living, but having once taken it he must maintain it. Still I think that law in Boston will keep you out of the way of spending fifteen hundred or two thousand dollars, that a retirement of idle luxury would impose upon you at Waltham. Every southern visitor must see your improvements, show them to his wife, and eat and drink you ten guineas' worth. $2000 saved, and $2000 got is $4000, enough to meet all the demands on your treasury, over and above the resources drawn from your property. Perhaps the superior cheapness of living in Boston may not strike you. I reply, a busy man may make savings and reputably, if he will; and indeed he must renounce business, or be moderate in his pleasures. He must often draw a special plea and refuse a feast. This is not all. Make the comparison between business and no business. Farming at Waltham will be some resource, but I have no idea that it will afford that steady occupation which is essential to keep life from being a heavy burden. Books, you will say, afford that resource. In some degree they do, but they need auxiliary resources. In case you should be at Waltham, unemployed by the public, you will be in some danger of being forgotten by the great multitude — out of sight out of mind, is their maxim. By practice you will be in sight, and ready, in every one's mind, for such public employment as your friends will say ought to seek you. Therefore the bar is in my judgment the best place for you to occupy, whether you aim at economy in expense, tranquil enjoyment of friends, or the resumption of any public sta-

tion. Your social affections will find objects and exercise; you will be kept busy, and of course cheerful; you will not appear to be laid by or thrown away, but to have chosen your old post. Even if you should do little business, the extent of your sacrifice will be the more apparent. You will return, not with a raging thirst of gain, but with a resolution to study your cases and to merit confidence and reputation.

Hence I conclude you ought to "open shop" again. On conversing with Mr. Cabot, I confess he instantly decided the point against me; on further discussion he came over to my opinion. Indeed it seems to me not merely the best course, but the only one left to you. All which is humbly submitted.

FISHER AMES, *Foreman.*

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Dedham, November 7, 1802.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — The very hour and minute that I received and was reading your letter about Mr. Salisbury's experiments on my orchard grass-seed, pronouncing it, on philosophical authority, to be coarse and unfit for pasture, my cows were in my house-lot, eating it with the voracious appetite of ignorance. The Encyclopædia, I find, says it is liked by sheep and horses, but is *refused* by cows. The poor things did not know that it was the *dactylis glomeratus*, and was *refused* by cows. It is a shame to the very cattle to be so ignorant. It was natural to expect dreadful consequences from this apparently fatal mistake. The arts and sciences, who had spoken so plainly in their Encyclopædia, one would think, would send a witch to give my cows the colic. There was no temptation and very little excuse for the blunder, for in the lot were other grasses in abundance, — the honey-suckle, or white clover, the May or spear grass, and the other various sorts, or *gramina*, as we the learned, choose to term them. Yet, rejecting what was

good and lawful, and preferring that which it turns out, though I must insist they did not know it, was prohibited, they did prefer the aforesaid *dactylis glomeratus*, against the dignity of the Royal Society, and their Botanical Garden, and in contempt of the common law, and of the Encyclopædia, as before recited, and in very evil example to sundry other cows, who looked over my fence, desiring to offend in like manner. I will not wholly vindicate this enormity — it is too bad for that; but I urge, in palliation, that probably the *dactylis glomeratus* is as sweet as any grass that grows so rank; probably somewhat sweeter, for the hay is preferred by my cattle. But I can scarcely doubt, that the white clover, and other small grasses, are better pasture. But as the orchard grass grows very fast, while the others stand still, and often forms a tuft, or hassock, in rich land, as large as a peck measure, unless the cattle love it much better, they will not keep it down so close; for in an equal space of time it will be ranker than other grasses, and, being the rankest, will of course be left. Yet this very inconsiderable difference, supposing it to exist, in favor of other grasses, which is, however, mere hypothesis, is an affair of trivial account. As the orchard grass is succulent and juicy, and cattle will eat it, their preference or taste is of no great importance to your own cows. If, indeed, you invite your neighbor's cows to push down your fence and breakfast in your lot, you should entertain them on the best. The grass and hay are highly nourishing; they are abundant, and, with manure, bring better crops on dry lands than any other grass, perhaps not excepting clover.

The last spring I remarked my orchard grass grew thick, and formed hassocks, while the dry cold weather kept all other sorts back. On the whole, this species of grass is with me beyond the grade of experiment. It has tried excellence, and I will stick to it.

I have a great deal more to say to you. I am full of zeal about farming. Cattle and fruit trees are my themes, in prose. Poetry, if I had any, I would devote to my pigsty and politics — two scurvy subjects, that should be coupled together. I wish exceedingly to get such cows as, being well fed on the *dactylis glomeratus*, will give more milk than

any other cows. The Alderney breed is said to be of that description, but, being English, I make no doubt they would refuse the *dactylis*. Expect to hear from me again very soon. Your affectionate friend.

P. S. I have been to Paine's, chiefly to see the cattle. Unfortunately, he was not at Waltham. I will add a few words on farming affairs.

Your English bull was certainly a very fine animal; but size, which strikes the multitude, and beauty of form, so much admired by the few who have taste, are not alone the objects of the breeder. Cattle for the butcher should be bred in the distant farms, where land is cheap. Waltham and Dedham farms will not answer to breed for fatting, no, not even for working oxen. Mere size, however important in Vermont, is no object here. The best cows for milk may be bred with profit, because the fresh butter, for the market of Boston, must be sent from the farms in the vicinity, and the best cows are not to be bought. To breed them, therefore, is, in my view, a great affair. Whether your old bull that killed the Irishman, and so perhaps hindered his being naturalized by Governor McKean, is of the race for good milkers, I know not. Your cattle produced from him appear to me rather too bony, and not remarkably handsome. This I ascribe to the cows not being selected very carefully for their excellence in point of form. The bull that I had from Waltham was a fine formed animal. I bred from him and a very fine cow, a round handsome bull, as fine, I believe, though not so large as some, as fine as any ever bred in the State. From him and my best cows I have made some attempts to breed a race, and, as far as I can pronounce on heifers, with entire success. A cow that gives less than a pail of milk is denied citizenship in my cow-yard. The best that I can buy with *argent*, *beaucoup d'argent*, I buy, and the very prime of these and of those I breed, I select for breeders.

Some cows are washy, pining animals, give poor milk, though a great deal of it, often go farrow, and are soon dry, or almost dry. I watch them on all these accounts, and have had them often milked in pails that are graduated and measured from bottom to the top. On the whole, I conclude

that color, size, crossing the breed, and several other articles of the popular faith, are mere prejudices. The cow that gives the *most* milk, often, and perhaps as often as any other, gives the *best* milk. All the good qualities, even beauty of form, may as well unite as be disjoined. The best cow may prove the hardiest, have the fattest calf, the most rarely go farrow, give the best milk, the most, and the longest. All these properties are inheritable, and, by selecting fine cows to breed from, double the common profit may certainly be had from our dairies. I will not pretend that I shall effect half as much as I brag of effecting. I am certain, however, that I have made some steps forward in a business the most neglected, though the most important, of any in our farming science near Boston. My endeavors are but recent, though aided by my care seventeen years ago to procure two or three very fine cows; from which I have a progeny of heifers.

The fame of English cows is great; and I am in doubt whether this is owing to any care in breeding them, or to the simple circumstance that they feed themselves on the best and in the greatest abundance, which the dripping English climate enables them to do. Our burning sun brings a pinching drought almost yearly. The breed of horses has long occupied all the thoughts of jockeys and fops and gamesters. Of course I conclude that, Bakewell excepted, English cows have been neglected as much as our own in the race, and better taken care of in the feeding.

I will add a word on *breeding* cattle, and on *feeding* them.

Breeding.— I see, in my experience, full proof that certain fine properties are transmissible. As much care should be had for the bull as the cow; and this care, continued for two or three generations of the cattle, will banish those instances of a degenerate progeny which sometimes appear. A calf will resemble a distant relation of the family, more than the sire or dam, and the properties may be as different as the shape and color. But, admitting these exceptions to exist, which prove the rule, not detract from it, an improved race, and a peculiar race, having certain excellences to distinguish them, will be formed. It is a folly very much in fashion to breed horses, and great dependence is placed on the invaria-

ble excellence of the colts from the sires and dams. The race of gamblers and spendthrifts is indubitably propagated, and is not in the least inferior to the gamblers and spendthrifts of any former age. Why, then, should not cattle be produced like their sires, as certainly as coxcombs? *Omne majus in se continet minus.*

Feeding. — In our red hot climate, the grass dries up every year exactly on the 20th of July, and remains brown till the 1st of September. The cows, half starved, are pinched, and when the grass grows, their milk returns no more. Nature very prudently applies her energies to cover their ribs. Hence the loss of milk is great. To prevent this loss, I plant corn, and cut it up close to the ground, for my cows to eat it while the ears are green. I plant pumpkins without corn to shade them; these ripen early. I slice them once a day for their supper or breakfast. Item, I sow carrots and give them tops and all. Thus I keep them full of milk and full of flesh. But a cow will not easily gain more flesh in the barn. She comes out in the spring as lean as she goes in. Therefore, besides good hay, currying and great care in often feeding, I give some meal daily, say one or two quarts to each cow, from January to June, increasing it as the days lengthen and the calves lug their dams more and more. My calves weigh thirty pounds a quarter at seven or eight weeks old. I choose to continue the meal two or three weeks after the cows go to grass, then the green feed will not drench them. They will hold their flesh; they will immediately give out great messes; a short drought will not pinch their bags; the milk will yield more cream and butter; whereas the cows that are poorly fed, do not give full messes for fifteen or twenty days after being turned out to grass. Being weak in health, dry weather reduces their milk and it is poor in quality.

You will say, such expense in meal exceeds the profit. I reply, my cows pay nearly ten pounds a year each. The meal is food, and of course less hay will answer. Moreover, cows in good flesh eat less food than such as are very lean. They are even less dainty, and reject meadow or bog hay less fastidiously than other cows. In case of an accident, a broken limb, for instance, or an unforeseen necessity to dry a cow, she is easily turned into beef.

I admire to visit my barn, and see the cows as happy as the being well born and well fed can make them. I recollect an expression of a French traveller in England. Speaking of the cows in a gentleman's lawn, I believe you call it, he says of the cows, *de qui l'embonpoint annonceroit leur maitre.* I should be very proud of such a description given of my cows, and, after a year or two, I hope to deserve it for them. But that honor depends on the progress of my English mowing. I manure my best lands, and, after having made a lot very good, I think it fitted for manure. Thus I prefer the aristocracy of grounds: the best will make the best returns. Thirty great loads to an acre will bring two tons to the acre. A less ample dressing the next year will bring as much crop after; and the highest possible health and strength will be infused into the grass roots. The ground will be swelled by the ferment of the manure; each root will be large and strong to seek its nourishment. The grass will get good habits.

Take only one crop from such lands, and feed off the after growth. Your cows will pay for it better than the rowen or after crop would; an acre of fine mowing to each cow will keep her full fed, and thus a dairy always urged by the best food, winter and summer, and never pinched, will be all that a dairy can be. How important, then, is it to have cows that will give a pailful, say ten wine quarts, instead of six? that will give it a month longer than other cows, and milk of a better quality?

I wish a fair trial of the Alderney race, or any other good race in England, but I hope more from selecting the very best Yankees.

Not a word of the foregoing was written to be published, but if you think the materials of any value to Arthur Young, or such very wise folks, I care not what use you make of them, provided you excuse me from the glory of appearing, *nominatim*, in print.[1]

[1] He occasionally corresponded on agricultural subjects, with Col. Pickering, whose warm interest in them is well known.

A short extract from a letter to that gentleman, under the date of October 26, 1805, is subjoined.

. . . . . .

"I have tried Sainfoin, and seen Lucerne tried. I do not believe in either

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Boston, December 13, 1802.

My Dear Friend, — Our ruin advances like a ship-launch, very slow at first, so that you can scarcely see motion, then quicker, and then so quick as to fire the ways. Congress is sitting, and we are expecting the gracious message from the throne. Its nature I will not pretend to say I can conjecture. It will, no doubt, address the popular passions, and try to excite or to gratify them. The hopes and fears of the people are two windlasses, which the political machine obeys, as implicitly as any machine can. Those who turn the windlass, are as blind as the French revolutionists to the ruin that is sure to reach them. For revolution is merciless towards those of her own household; like some other loathsome existences, she is sure to eat up her own litter. They will probably change the places of doing the financial business of the government from the United States Bank to the State banks. They will thus hope to organize a faction in each State, devoted to themselves; to divide, by such means, the moneyed interest of the State, and to attach a part to themselves; and, after having thus secured an influence in each State, to throw back the government, by amendments, into the hands of their partisans in the several States: Virginia being not first among equals, but such a head to the confederacy as Rome was to the confederacy of the Latins, or Tuscans, the more a mistress for affecting to hide her power. All this will not be done at

of them. Every kind of weed, and all the common grasses, seem able to overpower them. Dear as labor is, I will not believe those grasses good that will not grow themselves, but must have the *posse* raised to help them grow.

I shall be truly happy to converse with you, and shall think it an excellent bargain, to truck off my pig wisdom for your potato knowledge.

On the whole, I expect no immediate and extensive benefit from new agricultural inventions or discoveries. Enough is known for an age to come, if, in that period, the present *best* practice can be made the *general* practice. You will not suppose me so absurd as to condemn the zeal of speculatists, or to refuse any new improvement, when ascertained to be such.

I am happy to communicate all the little I know about *pigs*, to my friends; but, though often importuned, I have refused, and shall never be willing, to climb into my literary sty as an author."

this session; the mob must be trained, and kept as ferocious as a Spanish bull, first teased by little darts stuck into his hide, before he is turned out to toss men and dogs.

To prevent this utter destruction of all that is worth saving, we must animate the federalists. We must try to raise their zeal high enough to defend, on principle, what the others would seize by violence. The federalists must entrench themselves in the State governments, and endeavor to make State justice and State power a shelter of the wise, and good, and rich, from the wild destroying rage of the southern Jacobins. Such a post will be a high one, from which to combine in our favor the honest sentiments of New England at least. Public opinion must be addressed; must be purified from the dangerous errors with which it is infected; and, above all, must be roused from the prevailing apathy, the still more absurd and perilous trust in the moderation of the violent, and the tendency of revolution itself to liberty. These latter expect order as the only thing that can ensue from confusion. Liberty, they think, gets rid of a fever by bleeding at the throat; her winding-sheet is so much wholesome clean linen. Her assassins say (and these dupes will believe they are her champions) she is a goddess, and cannot die.

It is indispensably necessary; — it is, I believe, though most of my friends say not—it is practicable to rouse our sleeping patriotism — sleeping, like a drunkard in the snow, to wake no more. It is possible to rouse the able men to action with pen and ink, and by their support of one newspaper—not a dozen newspapers, as at present—federalism would take the ascendant; the sense of the country would be nearly unanimous; Jacobinism would sneak back into dirty lanes and yellow fever courts; vice and ignorance would march under their own banners, and, though we may be overpowered, we should not be deluded. Such an exertion, as I allude to, has not yet been made. The newspapers have been left to the lazy or the ill-informed, or to those who undertook singly work enough for six.

But, as I have written a long letter to Mr. Wolcott on this subject, I will not enlarge upon it here. Expect to see it, without a name, as soon as I can find courage to copy

four sheets. This is certain, our revolution cannot be stopped, provided our rich and able men remain as inactive as they now are, or prove as great dupes as those of France did. No resources but those of the mind need be employed. Let wealth lie snug in its iron chest, and let its defence be committed to the wit, learning, and talent of a few, then it will be safer than armies could make it. But where are the few? A puzzling question. But England did not need an *anti-Jacobin* half as much as we do; yet a few were found there, who did as much as Lord Duncan or Lord Nelson.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Boston, December 14, 1802.

My Dear Friend, — Young Warren has just called at the Council Chamber, (the Council is now adjourned till January next,) with your letter of October 15. I shall be happy to notice him for your, his father's, and his own sake. Colonel Dwight's seal came rather later than August, when you say mine was dated, and your letter. He, Colonel D., is pleased with it. He is member elect to Congress, and a good fellow; grateful for little favors from those to whom he ascribes great merit. I have also received seven volumes of books — Suetonius, Herodotus, Demosthenes; as to any others, I will employ James White, if I have occasion, though, I confess, I am very willing to ask any such service from you. Books claim and deserve more of my attention than fees. I am, in health, a man of straw; my declamation is not of the bar sort; and the clients are rather dull that I am not more out of credit with them than I am, which, however, is pretty generally. I hate the sort of application that needs drudgery. Impulses command me; I cannot command them; and the bar requires that they should be bespoke a month beforehand. Absolute poverty exacted of me, four years ago, that I should go to the bar and truck off reputation for cash. I am now, with the aid of Mrs. A.'s

portion, and my own good management, which is better than you think it, rather better off. My farm will be soon productive; my India adventures turn out well; and though it pleases God to fill my house with children, (a son born in October, which makes my census four sons, one daughter,) yet beef and pork abound, and bread, and milk, and butter. I will not, therefore, work hard at the bar. *You* may, if you like it, yet I think you ought, but that you will *not* contract your expenses, in case you should get less than you expect in an office. I have written you at great length on the subject. You will soon have it. Though a nobleman, you ought to resume the practice. Joe Hall laughs at the project.

I have written a four-sheet letter to Mr. Wolcott, and one to you, yesterday, in the Council Chamber, which I have asked a friend to copy, on the state of affairs, and the need of exerting the best and utmost power of the pen, before the time comes (it is coming) to see the power of the sword. Your own I intend you shall have by this vessel, and a copy of that to Wolcott, and also of one I wrote, this day, to Jere Smith. The whole will show you nearly all my thoughts on paper. I am alone and unaided; you would impel things here with a force beyond all the rest. Revolution might be hindered: it will not be; for alone I cannot do it, and not a soul will help me. They sometimes yield to, but oftener stare at, my zeal, and, oftener still, laugh at my means. [In the Palladium you will see an imitation of an ode of Horace, *ad navem qua Virgilius vehebatur*. You will suspect the author, from the *notes*. He is unsuspected here, and is supposed to be from Connecticut. Much may be done, and something more than the former lazy effusions shall be; but others are surprisingly inert.]

Your friend, &c.

Bonaparte will surely flinch, if England does not. Democracy is a bully, fierce towards those who are afraid, conceding to those who defy. B. is no democrat, but he will not fight when England is ready and willing.

TO JEREMIAH SMITH.

Boston, December 14, 1802.

My Dear Friend, — The second French and first American Revolution is now commencing, or rather has advanced two sessions of the National Assembly almost, for the message will decide and do the work of the pending session. To demolish banks and funds, not directly, but under plausible pretexts, all false and cheating, all founded on experienced state policy, will be the first act, though the death-blow may not be given to either of them till the fifth, which will be three or five years later. To amend the Constitution, and give to Virginia the power to reign over us, is the next step. To do this, new activity will be used to raise and to strengthen the factions in each State, and to drill and equip them as *subs* to Virginia. The newspapers will lie and declaim as usual, and more than usual. Unprinted lies will be spread abroad, carefully steering off from post-roads and offices, as pedlars carry their packs, far out of the way of large shops. Emissaries, such as David Brown was, will be pedestrian and equestrian carriers of the *people's mail.* This is doing in all the obscure parts of New England; and the spirit of New England will be as much perverted soon, as it is flattered now. Even Connecticut, so ardent in federalism, will decline from her high station, and learn politics of Abraham Bishop. I am serious. A party inactive, is half conquered. The Feds maintain twenty opinions, the best of which is quite enough to ruin any party. "Let the people run themselves out of breath; all will come right; there is no occasion for us to do any thing." Others say, "We despair; nothing can be done with effect." Not unfrequently the same persons maintain both these opinions.

Let us be precise in deciding our object. First, negatively, it is not the regaining of the supreme power. The end is, security against the approaching danger, or the best security, if not perfect, that is attainable. What are the means? Not indispensably that we should again have a

majority. It is enough to have a strong minority. That minority need not be very numerous; but it should be powerful in talents, union, energy, and zeal. It should see far, and act soon.

At this moment, we actually hold sway in three of the New England States. Vermont has a good Governor, and many good Feds, almost one half the legislature. Rhode Island should be wrong, and lend the dirty mantle of its infamy to the nakedness of *sans-culottism*. New Jersey and New York are not hopeless. Delaware and Maryland are not yet as much emptied of federalism as Pennsylvania is,— say little of the more southern States, though federalism sprouts in all of them. It is, I own, however, with such a sickly, yellow vegetation as the potatoes show in winter, in a too warm cellar.

Now sum up the forces, and surely we are not to despair. We have a strong minority in numbers; of talents enough; of zeal little, but more may be excited, and the approaching danger, if duly represented, would excite it all. Self-defence exacts from us a union closer than ever, and supplies to our party the energy that party alone possesses — an energy that is inconsistent with languor or inaction in the chief men who inspire and guide it.

As the newspapers greatly influence public opinion, and that controls every thing else, it is not only important, but absolutely essential, that these should be used with more effect than ever. Let all the federal papers be kept up as high as at present; but let a combination of the able men throughout New England be made, to supply some one gazette with such materials of wit, learning, and good sense, as will make that superior to any thing ever known in our country, or in any other, except the English Anti-Jacobin in 1797 and 1798. To pretend to supply, with such materials, twenty federal papers, is absurd and impracticable. But, instead of uneducated printers, shop-boys, and raw school-masters being, as at present, the chief instructors in politics, let the interests of the country be explained and asserted by the able men, who have had concern in the transaction of affairs, who understand those interests, and who will, and ever will, when they try, produce a deep national impression.

The pen will govern, till the resort is to the sword, and even then, ink is of some importance, and every nation at war thinks it needful to shed a great deal of it. As matters are actually arranged, the Palladium must be that paper. It must have, it must have by requisition, the contributions of the mind from those who are rich in that sort of treasure. One or two of that gazette ought to be crowded into every small town, and more into larger towns, throughout New England. It must be so supplied, as to need no helps in money, but to force its own progressively increasing circulation. It should clearly and aptly state the merits of every question; tell every inquirer exactly what he wants to know about the public business, and in the manner that will impress him — in the manner that will confound and disarm jacobin liars. The principles, the circumstances, the effects of measures should be unfolded, summarily, for the most part, but often by profound investigation and close argument. Business paragraphs should be short, clear, and frequent. Occasional essays should appear, to examine speculative democratic notions, which yet prevail, and almost all of which are either false or pernicious, but often mischievous conclusions from admitted principles.

Wit and satire should flash like the electrical fire; but the Palladium should be fastidiously polite and well-bred. It should whip Jacobins as a gentleman would a chimney-sweeper, at arm's length, and keeping aloof from his soot. By avoiding coarse, vulgar phrases, it would conciliate esteem, and appear with an unusual dignity for a newspaper being. Foreign news should be skilfully exhibited, not in the jumbled mass that is usual. Literature demands the review of books, and especially of all newspapers, so far as their general scope, or any remarkable performances, require it. Agriculture should have a share, once a week at least, of the paper. Morals, manners, schools, and such disquisitions as general knowledge would supply, should be furnished with regularity. And for all these labors, various classes of able men should be engaged to supply these various departments. But for the superintendence and principal conduct of the paper, only a few should be selected, and the others should hold themselves as a body of reserve, to step in fresh when the front rank grows weary.

Only six able men in the different branches of this undertaking — I mean six men in the whole — would secure its success. McFingal Trumbull, I hope, would be one, as he is *Hermes redivions.*

Will you think of these things? Will you make these ideas known, in confidence, to Governor Gilman and Mr. Peabody? Will you contribute, with your pen, to such discussions of law or constitution, or such pleasantries as you can easily forward to Warren Dutton, Esq.? Will you spread these opinions among your leading good men, and hasten their deliberate judgment on the only means to save our country? All this being done, and well done, in every State, then let the building up the State governments be considered an important federal object. Let State justice be made stable and effective, to shelter the wise and rich from the proscriptions, and decrees to make emigrants, that the progress of the American Revolution will produce. Let the first men be persuaded to take places in the State assemblies. Let a system of conciliation and courting of the people — I mean such as are yet undecided — be pursued; let it be a system of proselytism. Let the popular and wealthy Feds take commissions in the militia, and try to win the men. All this must be done, or all will be in confusion, and that speedily. Federalism cannot be lost, or decline much lower, without losing all; for though new parties would succeed federal and jacobin, yet the extinction of federalism would be followed by the ruin of the wise, rich, and good. The only parties that would rise up afterwards will be the subdivisions of the victors — the robbers quarrelling about their plunder — all wicked.

Despondency, inaction, democratic sanguine notions, or federal despair, are to be renounced. I write as fast as I can, and am in a hurry to get done.

Now *you* may talk, for I require no more of your attention.

Your affectionate friend.

TO DWIGHT FOSTER.

Dedham, February 6, 1803.

My Dear Sir, — I am at home, after passing the week in Boston. You will have learned that the struggle of the choice of senator is over, at least, supposing the Senate should concur in the election of John Q. Adams.[1] The Democrats exult because Colonel Pickering had not a majority, and because Skinner had a plurality of seventy-one votes. Jacobinism is full of ardor, and is proud of its power in the government. It boasts that all the south is democratic, and I confess I see little cause to expect that the southern State governments will be in federal hands. Louisiana is a subject of popular irritation, and of temporary embarrassment to the powers that be. But I foretell the acquiescence of public opinion in the measures of forbearance and disgrace. We shall sit down, as Junius says, as a nation infamous and contented. We shall preserve peace and lose character. We shall part with our rights, and with armies and taxes. The rogue, who has his ears cropped for forgery, may say, "Ears bring in nothing; I can hear as well as ever." What is national character but a phantom that delights in blood? Such is philosophy, on the pillory and in the chair.

Yet Kentucky may possibly break its bridle, and rush into business. How would our philosopher[2] tame the infuriate man of the mountains? Perish, he would not; coöperate, he dare not; tax, he dare not; raise troops, he dare not. Your surly Davis seems to understand the Quaker character of our government, that when one cheek of Kentucky is smitten, requires them to turn the other. I will not say that war ought to be chosen; it is a great evil. But it ought to be prepared for, and the best mean to avert it is by

[1] Adams and Pickering were chosen senators from Massachusetts. Pickering had been a candidate for the House of Representatives, but had failed of election, though the majority against him was but small.

[2] Jefferson. The Spanish authorities in Louisiana had recently refused to permit the deposit of American merchandise at New Orleans; an event which occasioned much excitement in the western States, and particularly in Kentucky.

preparation. I leave to Mr. Jefferson to write pretty nonsense about peace and universal philanthropy.

The work of destruction seems to be retarded, and your democrats seem to wait for the next year's crop of ruin. I own I expected mint and debt would go this year. They go the next, and soon the workers of iniquity will follow their work, and worse destroyers will follow them. I hope nothing from time and truth, who tell, like gravestones, where the body rots. Passion and prejudice will slay, before they are chiselled and placed as memorials over the grave. Much might be done by writing; nothing will be. Federalism takes opium; Jacobinism gunpowder and rum.

We are told you are to resign. This I do not wish, and, all things considered, I am not sure I should advise. Your resolution will be taken before this will reach you, and your family will rejoice in it. I cannot, therefore, urge a reconsideration. Indeed Washington is not paradise but purgatory, where, I fear, sinners are made worse.

With the prevalence of southern politics, we have southern winters, rain in torrents, little snow, roads like harrow-teeth when it freezes, and like swamps when it thaws. I am, dear sir, Your friend, &c.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Boston, February 24, 1803.

My Dear Friend, — I begin to wish, with more than usual impatience, for your return to Boston. Life is wasting away; and all that part of it that passes without enjoying our friends is time lost. Besides I am almost separated from all my federal friends They are lazy or in despair, and they urge, with wonderful eagerness, the futility of all exertions to retrieve the public mind from its errors, or to prevent their consequences. I will not bore you with my side of the argument, which I still think as sound as I did

before I began to be teased and vexed with any opposition to it. I still believe the talents of a nation might sway its opinions, if not its sceptre of elective power. The pen will rule till the sword is drawn; and no matter which side draws it or finally holds it, the sword alone will rule. Liberty will be lost, and a military government, not a whit the better or the milder for the victory having been gained by the good men, if that should happen, will be established.

Hence I maintain that all the energies of the wise and good should be summoned into action, and strained to their *ne plus*, while this state of probation, this salvable interval shall continue. For when the progress of faction has reached violence, we go to our future state — to that region from whose bourne no republic can return. Fully impressd with the idea that we are making this progress; that for want of a strong impulse on the public mind, our federal strength is wasting, some part is lost by timidity, some by sloth, some by apathy, and much more by the envy and mean spirit of competition, which are sure to divide a party when no impulse, stronger than these petty passions, combines it, — I have, over and over again, made the offer to almost every considerable man in Connecticut and New Hampshire, as well as Massachusetts, to form a phalanx to write, &c.

My offers have produced some ridicule, more disgust, no coöperation. Weary and disgusted myself, despairing, as well I may, of any good effect from my single efforts, I now claim the quiet repose that, like a fool, I have so long refused to enjoy, and that I have so fruitlessly offered to renounce. I have done. And even if to-morrow the combination of able and industrious writers were made, I think I should persist in preferring my ease to the labor and obloquy of scribbling. I begin to relish the apathy that benumbs my friends. Zeal is a bad sleeper, and I will try opium with the rest of them. Expect me then, in future, to write about pruning apple trees, or breeding cattle. Let the federalists who are made for slaves, although their driver will be at great charge for whips, reap where they have sown; their harvest is ripening, and it will be all tares.

I hear that the debates of Parliament denote a risen

spirit in England. I rejoice in it — as they have the power, I am glad they have the spunk to resist the new Romans. But Bonaparte will not accept the challenge. As long as he can avoid war with John Bull, he will, and any nation that is willing and prepared to fight him, he will not fight. The French heroes seek no foes, but such as their own fears or the arts of France have already conquered. If, however, Russia will join England, I expect to see the war renewed *nolente* Bonaparte. As to Louisiana we shall sit down infamous and contented. Prayers and missions are our arms. If Victor should arrive at New Orleans, he will coax, bribe, and terrify; he will grant, by way of indulgence to the friends of liberty, what he will refuse as of right to the nation. Kentucky will be pacified to sell its produce, and lose the title to the navigation of the river; and when a war breaks out between France and England, the latter will block up the mouth, and the French will use the American flag to protect their own French cargoes, and the exercise of the rights of search and capture will be used with success, as a subject of complaint against the English. Thus we shall be useful tools to France, and she will have an influence to make us her associates in the war, if she has occasion for it. Yet I expect that France will see impending dangers from Great Britain so near and great as to delay the expedition to Louisiana, till a more convenient season, which may not soon arrive. At any rate our government dare not go to war, nor lay a tax for one hundred pounds, nor raise a battalion. The claims of Kentucky are embarrassing to them, and some pretext is wanted, that will pacify the wild men of the mountains for the present. France will furnish some pretext, and then we shall hear boasts enough of the wisdom that has saved our peace, and the spirit that has vindicated our honor. Is there any point on the scale of disgrace lower than that to which we have descended?

Massachusetts has yet a show of federalism. It may last a year longer. In the mean time, all that can be corrupted is corrupting, and all that cannot be perverted is nodding into a lethargy. The Jacobin mode of waging war resembles the expedition of Diomed into the Trojan camp.

There is to be seen only a quick destruction, that provokes no resistance — the victims die without waking. At Worcester, the son of Levi Lincoln is to pronounce an oration on the accession of Mr. Jefferson to the Consulate, and a great feast is to be made, that the ignorant may eat and drink themselves into Jacobinism. This pretty business is to be transacted also on a great scale at New Haven. Connecticut stands, but its good men should say incessantly, Take heed lest we fall. The race for Governor here will probably be uncontested; no symptoms yet appear of his Excellency Governor Gerry, being run. The General Court is busy making Banks and Turnpikes. A great Bank in Boston, of twelve hundred thousand dollars, is now in debate in the Senate, having passed the House. It is supported by the principal moneyed men in this town, and opposed by John Q. Adams, whose popularity is lessened by it. They say also he is too unmanageable. Yet he is chosen Senator to Congress in consequence of a caucus compact, that if Col. Pickering should not be elected on two trials, then the Feds would combine and vote for J. Q. A. This happened accordingly.

A bill reducing our seven Judges to five, as soon as two vacancies shall happen, altering their terms, and allowing at one of the two terms in a county, one Judge to be a quorum, and raising their salaries to $2000 when such reduction shall take place, has passed the House. Its fate in the Senate is dubious. It is a proof of melioration that a competent salary is voted. We may need the state tribunals as sanctuaries, when Jacobinism comes to rob or slay. I pray you write often, for nothing is more acceptable than news from you. I pray you offer my best compliments, &c. to Mrs. Gore, in which my wife always most sincerely joins.

Yours, &c.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

October 3, 1803.

My Dear Friend, — Your welcome favor of the 15th of August by the Galen, received this moment, reminds me that I must write by the John Adams, nearly ready to sail, in which Mr. Lowell and family are to be passengers. By him, you will of course expect to get news of me. Yet he has not lately seen me, and knows only from report how I am.

Many months ago, I believed my health in danger of a downfall. A series of colds half the winter, and all the spring, and through summer a bad stomach, and a laxity and irritation of the lower viscera, announced a crisis not far distant. Accordingly in August, I had a severe fainting fit, followed, as it was caused, by that complaint. For four days, my life was apprehended in instant danger. I sent, *in extremis*, for Dr. Jeffries, and have since taken other advice. I have renounced wine, butter, tea, and almost cider, and I think my change of regimen has produced a small, but progressive improvement of my condition. . . . I creep slowly and often sliding back, along the steep side of that hill from which I leaped headlong in August last. These details will not be uninteresting to you. I will only add, the visceral irritation has diminished, and my decline of strength is arrested at least. I have yet exuberant spirits, and should talk myself to death if I yielded to ten dollar clients, who urge me to go into Court, to keep my wits and my fibres, only half an hour for each of them, on the grindstone. This I have had the sense and the fortitude to refuse doing. I ride five miles in a chaise and return weak and weary, but daily stronger. Oh, if I could step on board the Adams, pass the winter in London, and return with you in May, how delightful! yet I am a fool to add, how painful! I am seriously advised, and importunately urged, to take a voyage to Calcutta, and I have offered, in that event, to use my endeavors with the British govern-

ment to ransom one of Tippoo's sons for a king, whose color and hereditary principles qualify him excellently to reign over the Jacobins. I hope that I can recruit by staying at home. It is a problem whether the sea air, seasickness, and the *et cæteras*, which on shipboard must be borne, if I could not bear them, would not give me to the sharks. My health, now it seems to be worth so little care, engrosses all I can bestow. The object of my life is to live, and to ascertain which answers best, boiled rice, or a dry rusk. Thus my friend, I am an outside passenger in the journey of the political folks. I take my part of the jolts and the dust, but am not to touch the reins with one of my fingers.

As to Louisiana, I agree with you in almost all your opinions. I cannot conceive that our Monroe and Livingston were ignorant (they ought not when the convention was signed to be ignorant) that the war between the First Consul and Great Britain would be renewed. I also say that the acquiring of territory with money is mean and despicable. For as to the right of navigating, &c. the Mississippi, *that* was our own before; and the nation that will put its rights into negotiation, is deserving of shame and chains. The least show of spirit, the least array of force, the slightest proof that any measure of shame, however ample, might find at last even *our* cowardice would reject, this would certainly have brought the Consul to terms — to any terms. As to the money we are to pay, I care not for it. As to the territory, the less of it the better. But the abject spirit of our administration is below all scorn. In such a state of things as we see, the rulers have the lowest of all personal and private views to answer. Their popularity is their all. Even that vile trinket is at risk. I do not believe that in New England, and especially with the yeomanry, they have gained applause. The merchants at the southward look with eyes of favor to the opening of the port of New Orleans. The western settlers also like the thing, and care not what mean compliances, nor how many millions it costs. The Mississippi was a boundary somewhat like Governor Bowdoin's whimsical all-surrounding orb — we were confined within some limits. Now, by

adding an unmeasured world beyond that river, we rush like a comet into infinite space. In our wild career, we may jostle some other world out of its orbit, but we shall, in every event, quench the light of our own.

Two causes might make a government free in principle, tranquil in operation, and stable in its existence: Separate orders in the state, each possessing much and therefore pledged to preserve all; or, secondly, the pressure of an external foe. The latter would produce the most exalted patriotism — the former would provide the most adequate substitute for it. But a democracy is only the isthmus of a middle state; it is nothing of itself. Like death it is only the dismal passport to a more dismal hereafter. Such is our state. Yet we have so few rabble, power centres so much in the hands of, say, three hundred thousand small landholders, and our state governments, rankly teeming with poison, so naturally sprout with the antidotes — because every separate mass of power breeds fear and hostility towards every other preponderant mass, that I have hopes blended with my anxiety, and I say that the crisis of our evils is probably more remote than my day or probably than yours, or even my children's. A safer conclusion is, that a case so anomalous as ours, so unlike every thing European in its ingredients, its action, and thus far in its operation, will baffle, for a long time, all the conjectures and prognostics that are drawn from other scenes. Not that I fancy other republics were ruled by men inferior to our heaven-born administration, or that our citizens are *angeli implumes*, as flattery has already made them believe, — but the means for faction to work with, and the means for good men to resist faction, are essentially different here from what they were in Greece or Rome, or even in pure France. Quiet is forbidden to us. Hope is not, chiefly because we can discern some impediments to our ruin, though scarcely any practicable path to our liberty. Monarchy is no path to liberty, offers no hopes. It could not stand, and would, if tried, lead to more agitation and revolution than any thing else. Our political soil must be seeded, like the earth after Noah's flood. Some of the seeds are winged and float at random; some swim in the flood, and no one can foretell whether

they will strike root, or where; others are swallowed by birds, and dropped in the regions to which they may migrate; others lie buried deep in the ground, covered with an oily coat, sealed up for posterity, when the plough may by some chance bring them up to the surface. How many ages it will take, for the right plants to get established in the right places, I know not. I leave that problem to Thucydides the second to decide, in his new History of the American Peloponnesian War, and whether that war will be between Virginia and New England, or between the Atlantic and Tramontane States, or whether Chaos and old Night will jumble together the elements of society, as in France, the poor against the rich, and the vile against the worthy, I say not. No muse has told me, and uninspired I cannot tell you.

I dismount from my Pegasus, as an invalid should not ride too far at a time, and observe, in prose, that I think Congress will ratify the Convention,[1] and provide the needful to carry it into effect. But I hope the orators on the federal side will fully develop the subject, start all the fair objections and no others; and impress on the public every topic that will hold the administration responsible for this great affair, as their measure, which, without approving or aiding, the Feds will not obstruct by their votes; — they will make it intelligible; they will call for explanations and answers to objections, so that the whole force of their reasons shall be left to operate with the nation. This contrast would signalize federalism. For in the case of the British Treaty, since proved to be a good one, the Jacobins opposed *con furore*. Now the Feds show their regard for principles by their forbearance, and resort only to truth and argument. I will not be sparing of any means in my power to urge the grant of your outfit. But I have not confidence enough in the powers that be to expect that such hearts will devise liberal things.

I observe that the valiant printers of London threaten to invade France, with royalists under the command of Pichegru and Dumourier and the Princes. I hope not yet. It

[1] With France.

is too soon. If the invasion be laid aside, and the arms of the Consul should be in disgrace, the coward spirit of Europe may be roused, the weight of their new chains may make the nations weary; and. after two or three years, an insurrection, once begun in Brittany, the Low Countries, Italy or Holland, may be furnished with officers, money and continental aid, with some effect. But until the British nation has become really martial in spirit, and confident in discipline, it is too soon to think of encountering France in her interior or in her dependencies. It would be putting too much at risk, and with too little chance of success. A failure would prove a sad disaster, as it would remove, to an indefinite distance, the reduction of the gigantic power of the Consul.

The brilliant success of your Commission ought to crown Mr. Jay with glory,[1] and wreathe very green honors about your head, my friend. For I know very well your perseverance, and your being so much *au fait* on all the many questions that have occurred, has contributed essentially to the success. Your own mind and your friends will bestow the due praise; perhaps the body of the merchants will allow as much per cent. as they pay when bankrupt. But the Jacobins and the administration will not forgive you the success that puts them so much in the wrong.

October 7.

Mr. Cabot was here at my house yesterday, and had much to say about you. He almost advises me to take a trip to England. But while I hope I shall do well at home, I doubt extremely whether I could bear the hardships even of a favorable voyage. But should it please God to give a little addition to my strength before spring, I may then contemplate, with some seriousness, the project of visiting London. At present I should be barely able to get as far as Boston.

I shall be very happy to see you here in May next, because, among other reasons, I calculate that I must then

[1] The indemnities awarded to American merchants by the Commission amounted to about six millions of dollars.

have better health, if I do see you. Be that as it may, I shall be, as long as I am any thing,

Your affectionate friend, &c.

Mrs. A. joins with me in best regards to you and Mrs. Gore.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, October 26, 1803.

My Dear Friend, — I had resolved to write to you, before I received any letter from you. For a week this scheme of merit has been formed and postponed, till by your esteemed favor, with the printed copy of the message, it has this day failed entirely.

I am glad to hear of your safe, though weary, arrival at the heaven of other men's ambition, your purgatory, where indeed you will see good spirits, with *other* spirits conjured by democracy from the vasty deep. Remember what I have often told you, that the scene you are entering upon will form the best characters, and display them to the greatest advantage. The furnace of political adversity will separate the dross, but purify the gold. You will have the best society, under circumstances to endear it to you and you to them. To serve the people successfully, will be out of your power; the attempt to do it will be unpopular. To flatter, inflame, and betray them, will be the applauded work of demagogues, who will dig graves for themselves, and erect thrones for their victors, as in France.

The principles of democracy are everywhere what they have been in France; the materials for them to work upon are not in all places equally favorable. The fire of revolution burnt in Paris like our New England rum, quick to kindle, not to be quenched, and leaving only a bitter, nauseous, spiritless mass. Our country would burn like its own swamps, only after a long drought, with much smoke, and

little flame; but when once kindled, it would burrow deep into the soil, search out and consume the roots, and leave, after one crop, a *caput mortuum*, black and barren, for ages. If it should rain blessings, and keep our soil wet and soaking, it might not take fire in our day.

Our country is too big for union, too sordid for patriotism, too democratic for liberty. What is to become of it, he who made it best knows. Its vice will govern it, by practising upon its folly. This is ordained for democracies; and if morals as pure as Mr. Fauchet ascribes to the French republic, did not inspire the present administration, it would have been our lot at this day.

But on reading the message I am edified, as much as if I had heard a Methodist sermon in a barn. The men who have the best principles, and those who act from the worst, will talk alike, except only that the latter will exceed the former in fervor. But the language of deceit, though stale and exposed to detection, will deceive as long as the multitude love flattery better than restraints, as long as truth has only charms for the blind, and eloquence for the deaf. Suppose a missionary should go to the Indians and recommend self-denial and the ten commandments, and another should exhort them to drink rum, which would first convert the heathen? Yet we are told, the *vox populi* is the *vox dei;* and our demagogues claim a right divine to reign over us, deduced no doubt from the pure source I have indicated.

My health is somewhat better. I rode in a chaise to Boston yesterday with Mrs. A. It was a fine day; but in spite of all my precautions, I was caught by several friends, who tired me down in the street. My progress is slow, but I really think I make some.

You shall hear from me as often as I can find a spirit of industry to write, when I am not riding, which is twice a day. But if I should prove negligent, still believe me, as I really am,

Your truly affectionate friend, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, October 31, 1803.

My Dear Friend, — I have this morning received by post your delightful treaty,[1] and S. H. Smith's paper, and your esteemed favor, in which you give me a particular account of yourself and your accommodations. This latter is really more interesting to my curiosity and feelings than the rest of the contents under cover.

There is little room for hope, almost none for satisfaction, in the contemplation of public affairs. When *somebody* (a Jacobin too) drives, we must go; and we shall go the old and broad road, so smooth, so much travelled, but without any half-way house.

Having bought an empire, who is to be emperor? The sovereign people? and what people? all, or only the people of the dominant States, and the dominant demagogues in those States, who call themselves the people? As in old Rome, Marius or Sylla, or Cæsar, Pompey, Antony, or Lepidus will vote themselves provinces and triumphs.

I have as loyal and respectful an opinion as possible of the sincerity in folly of our rulers. But surely it exceeds all my credulity and candor on that head, to suppose even they can contemplate a republican form as practicable, honest, or free, if applied when it is so manifestly inapplicable to the government of one third of God's earth. It could not, I think, even maintain forms; and as to principles, the otters would as soon obey and give them effect, as the *Gallo-Hispano-Indian omnium gatherum* of savages and adventurers, whose pure morals are expected to sustain and glorify our republic. Never before was it attempted to play the fool on so great a scale. The game will not however be half played; nay, it will not be begun, before it is

[1] A copy of the Convention with France. Mr. Dwight was at this time a Representative in Congress.

changed into another, where the knave will turn up trumps and win the odd trick.

Property at public disposal is sure to corrupt. Here, to make this result equally inevitable and inveterate, power is also to be for some ages within the *arbitrium* of a house of representatives. Before that period, Botany Bay will be a bettering-house for our public men. Our morals, forever sunning and flyblown, like fresh meat hung up in the election market, will taint the air like a pestilence. Liberty, if she is not a goddess that delights in carnage, will choke in such an atmosphere, fouler than the vapor of death in a mine.

Yet I see, that the multitude are told, and it is plain they are told because they will believe it, that liberty will be a gainer by the purchase. They are deceived on their weak side; they think the purchase a great bargain. We are to be rich by selling lands. If the multitude was not blind before, their sordid avarice, thus addressed, would blind them.[1]

But what say your wise ones? Is the payment of so many millions to a belligerent no breach of neutrality, especially under the existing circumstances of the case, when Great Britain is fighting our battles and the battles of mankind, and France is combating for the power to enslave and plunder us and all the world? Is not the twelve years reserve of a right to navigate, &c. a contravention of our treaty with Great Britain, as all other nations are for twelve years excluded from a participation of this privilege, especially too as the increase of the French and Spanish navigation is avowedly the object of the stipulation?

I have not yet read the treaty. I have only glanced my eye over the seventh article. I am weary and sick of my subject.

My health is bad, and is to be bad through the winter. I sleep poorly, digest poorly, and often take cold. I perse-

[1] According to the federal opinion of that period, Louisiana was a mere wilderness, equally destitute of inhabitants and of value; — the title which France had in the country sold to us was very disputable and uncertain; and the real object of Mr. Jefferson was, under pretence of a purchase, to aid Bonaparte's finances at a critical moment. The capacities of the West had hardly been revealed to either of the two parties.

vere in riding on horseback, and shall saw wood in bad weather when I cannot ride. I live like an ostrich or man-monkey, imported from a foreign climate, and pining amidst plenty for want of the native food that would suit his stomach. Mine is as fastidious as a fine lady's, who is afraid of butter on her potatoes, lest it should tinge her complexion.

I intend soon to try the lukewarm bath in the evening, not often, but occasionally. A bad digestion is an evil not to be removed. Its effects I hope may be parried by finding something that I can better digest than my usual food.

My wife and I join in saying, God bless you.

Being yours, &c.

TO CHRISTOPHER GORE.

Dedham, November 16, 1803.

My Dear Friend,—You will soon see Edmund Dwight, who sailed in the ship John Adams, and hear from his mouth all that relates to my health. The care of this object is all that occupies me. In good weather, and in bad, I find exercise to ride in the one, and saw wood in the other; and, on the whole, I have some strength, though not much new flesh to boast of. I am confined to my house and six miles round it, and have seen Boston but once in the last three months. Being thus out of the world, you will not expect much from my correspondence, and this must be my excuse, if I write seldom and short. Our own politics are unworthy comment. We are in the hands of the philosophers of Lilliput. I have lately read Randolph's and Nicholson's speeches in reply to R. Griswold's call for papers,[1] and I protest that the Court of Sessions, in old Justice Gardner's day, produced as good sense and as good logic. What can be expected from a

[1] This call was for a copy of the treaty between France and Spain, under which France claimed a title to Louisiana.

country where Tom Paine is invited to come by the chief man, as Plato was by Dionysius; where the whiskey secretary is Secretary of the Treasury; and where such men as the English laws confine in gaol for sedition, make the laws, and unmake the judges? The purchase of Louisiana is said to begin to make trouble for these poor creatures. The Don blusters, in the person of the Marquis Irujo, and swears we shall not have it; and the majority seem to be ready and willing to send General Wilkinson to serve an *habere facias possessionem* at New Orleans. Our people care not much for these things. To get money is our business; the measures of government and political events, are only our amusements. To be told of our sovereignty, our rights, &c., &c., only gives zest to that entertainment; it does not change its nature, nor our nature.

In England I behold a real people, patriotism broad awake, and holding authority over all the passions and prejudices of the nation. This, at least, is the outside look of the thing. I well know how deceptive this often is. You are behind the scenes, and, probably enough, discern the meanness of those who seem to play the great parts so well. We expect a great *fête* for Bonaparte, as soon as the dark nights admit of his passage. I confess I am not quite free from inquietude in respect to the invasion. I suppose his passage possible; if he should land an army on English ground, his first victories probable, and his ultimate defeat certain. Great Britain is not to be conquered; but I place little reliance on the tailors and men-milliners in regimentals; they would be beaten. Pray let me hear from you often.

I am more than ever engrossed by my farm. *Hic libertas, hic patria.* It is liberty to have one hundred acres, and that is emphatically *my* country. How much my swine weigh, how much milk my cows give, what bright hopes I have in my trees, I will not tell you; yes, I will, when you come here to eat my pork and Indian pudding.

Mrs. Ames enjoins it upon me, to offer to you and Mrs. Gore her best regards with my own.

Your friend, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, November 29, 1803.

YOUR letters, my dear friend, afford me so much pleasure and information, that I cannot forbear writing without ingratitude, nor write without making very barren returns. Whether bad health has abated my ardor in every thing, or that the inevitable consequence of having nothing to do with our politics is, that I cease to care who has, or how the work is done, the fact is certain, I am almost at home expatriated from the concerns that once exclusively engrossed my thoughts. In this philosophic, lackadaisical temper, I really think my fellow sovereigns participate. Congress-hall is a stage, and by shifting the scenes, or treading the boards in comedy or farce, (for, since the repeal of the judiciary, you do not get up tragedy,) you amuse our lazy mornings or evenings as much, or nearly as much, as the other theatres. But, in sober truth, the affair is as much theatrical on our part as on that of the honorable members on the floor. You personate the patriot, and we, the people, affect the sovereign. We beg you to believe, on the evidence of the newspapers, that we watch you closely, and lie awake a-nights with our fears for the public safety. No such thing. We talk over our drink as much in earnest as we possibly can, and among ourselves, when nobody is a looker-on whose opinion we dread, we laugh in the midst of our counterfeit rage. The fact is, our folks are ten times more weary of their politics, than anxious about their results. Touch our pockets directly, or our pleasures ever so indirectly, then see our spirit. We flame, we soar on eagles' wings, as high as barn-door fowl, and, like them, we light to scratch again in the muckheap. Alter the Constitution; amend it, till it is good for nothing; amend it again and again, till it is worse than nothing; violate without altering its letter, it is your sport, not ours. Our apathy is a match for your party spirit. The dead flesh defies your stimulants. We sleep under the operation of your knife, as the Dutchman is said to have gnawed a roasted fowl, while the surgeon cut off his leg. There is no

greater imposture than to pretend our people watch, understand, or care a sixpence for these cheap sins, or the distant damnation they will draw down on our heads. If honest men could associate for honest purposes, if we had, in short, a party, which I think federalists have not, or have not had the stuff to make, their steady opposition to the progress of a faction towards tyranny, revolutionary tyranny, might be checked. I waive the subject, however, on which I have a thousand times vented my vexations to no purpose. Peace to the dead!

Louisiana excites less interest than our Thanksgiving. It is an old story. I am half of Talleyrand's opinion, when he says we are phlegmatic, and without any passion except that for money-getting.

Mr. Huger, in his speech on the alteration of the clause respecting the votes for President and Vice-President, pays compliments to the candor and sincerity of the amendment-mongers, when they protest and swear, that they want no other amendment. This compliment is not worth much to the receivers, but is a costly one to the bestower. Roland and Condorcet always protested that they would stop. But is a revolution or the lightning to be stopped in midway? Mr. E. has libelled the Constitution in a newspaper. The Virginia Assembly has voted amendments of the most abominable sort. All the noble lords of Virginia and the south are as much for rotation in office as the senators of Venice. It is the genuine spirit of an oligarchy, eager to divide power among themselves, and jealous of the preëminence of any one even of their own order.

Mr. R., in his speech on the constitutionality of acquiring territory, has risen again in my opinion. I cannot readily assent to the federal argument, that our government is a mere affair of special pleading, and to be interpreted in every case as if every thing was written down in a book. Are not certain powers inseparable from the fact of a society's being formed? are they not incident to its being? Besides, as party interprets and amends the Constitution, and as we the people care not a pin's point for it, all arguments from that source, however solid, would avail nothing.

One of two things will, I confess, take place: either

the advances of the faction will create a federal party, or their unobstructed progress will embolden them to use their power, as all such gentry will if they dare, in acts of violence on property. In the former case, a federal party, with the spirit which, in every other free country, political divisions impart to a minority, will retard and obstruct the course of the ruling faction towards revolution; and if they do not move quick, they will not, perhaps, be able long to move at all. In case of a strong opposition, (I use the term in a qualified and guarded sense,) the federalists could preserve some portion of right, though they might not have strength to reassume power, which, I confess, I do not look for.

Suppose an attack on property, I calculate on the "sensibilities" of our nation. There is our sensorium. Like a negro's shins, there our patriotism would feel the kicks, and twinge with agonies that we should not be able so much as to conceive of, if we only have our faces spit in. In this case, we could wipe off the ignominy, and think no more of the matter. He that robs me of my good name, takes trash. What is it but a little foul breath, tainted from every sot's lungs? But he who takes my purse, robs me of that which enriches him, instead of me, and therefore I will have vengeance.

Hence I am far from despairing of our commonwealth. It is true, our notions are pestilent and silly. But we have been cured already in fourteen years of more of them than a civil war and ten pitched battles would have eradicated from France. The remainder are, indeed, enough to ensure our destruction; and we should be destroyed, if these silly democratic opinions, which once governed us all, were not now so exclusively claimed and carried to extremes by those whom we so dread and despise, that we in New England are, in a great measure, driven out of them. The fool's cap has been snatched from our heads by the southern Demos, who say this Olympic crown was won by them. Let them wear it.

Connecticut is sound enough perhaps; for if democracy were less in that State, federalism would sink with them as in the other States. But their first men are compelled to come forward in self-defence. They are in the federal army what the immortals were in the Persian, or the sacred band

under Pelopidas. I will not mention Vermont. Rhode Island is not to be spoken of by any body. But New Hampshire, old Massachusetts, and Connecticut are too important to be forced into a revolution; and, at present, appearances do not indicate that they will join in hastening it on willingly.

For these and other reasons, I think our condition may not soon be changed so essentially as, in like critical circumstances, it would be in any other country. We shall lose indeed almost every thing; but my hope is, that we shall save something, and preserve it long.

Thus we may, like a wounded snake, drag our slow length along for twenty years; and time will in that period have more to do in fixing our future destiny than our administration. Events govern us; and probably those of Europe will, as heretofore, communicate an unforeseen and irresistible impulse to our politics. We are in a gulf stream, which has hitherto swept us along with more force than our sails and oars. I think the government will last my time. For that reason, I will fatten my pigs, and prune my trees; nor will I any longer be at the trouble to govern this country. I am no Atlas, and my shoulders ache. No, that irksome task I devolve upon Mr. . . . . , and Mr. . . . . , of the House, and Mr. . . . . , of the Senate. You federalists are only lookers-on.

You are a polite man, otherwise you would say I have tired you. In that respect I have used you as well as I do myself. In mercy to both, I this moment assure you of the affectionate regard with which I am, dear friend,

Yours, truly.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, January 15, 1804.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

Tracy's speech in a pamphlet will have effect on the New England legislatures. It has been copied into the Boston federal papers, and will be extensively read. . . . .

How is Tracy's health. Pray give my affectionate regards to him. I hope *David* will not slay him. It is attempted, because Tracy is a Goliah. It may be that a resolute lie can be hunted down in Connecticut, but it will be a credit to their good sense, if it can be. . . . . .

The spirit of banking is a perfect influenza. Dedham, Roxbury, and the upper part of Norfolk county, will petition, though at present I think the first and last will unite, and contend against Roxbury. I am, as you will suppose, a calm looker-on. What the General Court will do is yet unknown to me. Intrigue and speculation will probably have their perfect work. I want a bank in my barn-yard, and wish to be erected into a corporation sole, to take deposits of corn, for my pigs.

. . . . . .

I am still puny and tender. . . . . My constitution is like that of federalism, too feeble for a full allowance even of water-gruel, and like that, all the doctor I have is a Jacobin. The Lord, you say, have mercy on me a sinner.

. . . . . .

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, January 25, 1804.

My Dear Friend, —

. . . . . .

The violence of Randolph and Co. against the judges somewhat exceeds my estimate of the man and the party.[1] Democracy is a troubled spirit, fated never to rest, and whose dreams, if it sleeps, present only visions of hell. I

[1] The Judge of the United States District Court for New Hampshire, had recently been impeached and removed. Articles of impeachment were voted also against Judge Chase, who was tried and acquitted. Randolph afterwards, in his mortification at this failure, proposed to amend the Constitution, so as to make the Judges removable by joint resolution of the two Houses. He also prevailed upon the House to refuse to pay the respondent's witnesses. The violence spoken of in the text was displayed in a debate in the House on the adoption of the articles of impeachment against Judge Chase.

have long thought justice one of the most refined luxuries of the most refined society; that ours is too gross, too nearly barbarous, to have it. Justice, to be any thing, must be stronger than government, or at least stronger than the popular passions. Nothing in the United States is half so strong as these passions; indeed the government itself has no other strength. I have contemplated an essay, to show that democracy and justice are incompatible; but Randolph's tongue outruns my wits, and proves before I could discuss.

. . . . . .

I am very early in life arrived at the still water, where all is contemplative, and nothing in action. I live, the ambitious would say I stay, but it is for my friends and my family. My health is bad enough; but, on the whole, very good for a bad sort. God give you health, long life, and patience.

Yours, ever.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, January 20, 1805.

My Dear Friend, — If I write often, as I like to write, you must be content to accept very little at a time. My stock of merchantable ideas will not bear any thing beyond a small retail trade. There was a time when I was foolish enough to think the examination of a public question of some public importance; but since party reasons are the only ones sought for and regarded, I am duly and humbly sensible of the impertinence of urging any other. Congress may restrict the trade to Saint Domingo, and hang the traders, or permit the French to do it. Our public, I engage, will be as tame as Mr. Randolph can desire. You may broil Judge Chase and eat him, or eat him raw; it shall stir up less anger or pity, than the Six Nations would show, if Cornplanter or Red Jacket were refused a belt of wampum. The boast of a love of liberty, so often repeated, like a coward's boast how he would fight when once he gets hotly engaged, is all bluster. Perhaps Connecticut has some spunk. The

rest of the Yankees have none; and will part with their plaything, liberty, with less of the pouts than your or my children would yield to any boy big enough to be President, their gingerbread chariot. Virginia has nothing to fear from us, and we have nothing to hope from her.

. . . . Governor Caleb's speech is a calm defiance of the votes of next April. For once I think his preaching on principles in the abstract seasonable, and because such preaching is now as effectual as any other.

. . . . . .

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, November 27, 1805.

My Dear Sir, — The late condemnations in England have filled men's minds with anxiety, and not a little eagerness of expectation of the measures of Congress.[1] It is a misfortune for a man, who has nothing to do with public affairs but to talk about them, to have his doubts on popular questions. This is my case. I am very willing the British should turn out exceedingly in the wrong, in regard to condemning our vessels when laden with colony produce. If they are not in the wrong, I see not the policy or fitness of hazarding our commerce, peace, and prosperity, on an untenable point. Force of guns is on their side. I would not voluntarily have the force of argument against us also. In case a candid examination should create many doubts of our assumed principles, as I think it will, why should we make the retracting of the contrary principles by England a *sine qua non* of our measures? You will see many members very willing to kindle and blaze, because England is in question. Others, I think, will in their hearts feel hostility

[1] Several American vessels had recently been condemned by the Admiralty Courts in Great Britain, for reasons that were considered new and strange, and to be justified only by a forced construction of maritime law. Their neutrality had been declared to be fraudulent and evasive, on grounds that produced great alarm among our merchants.

to Eastern commerce, and act from that hostility. Some more will be ignorant, and will be made to believe all the blustering tales our vanity has to tell, about the dependence of England on the United States. Confiscation of British debts is a measure very like war. There can be no other ground for it, than as reprisals for losses by their unjust condemnations. When angry nations resort to reprisals, they ought to expect war, and prepare for it. A non-intercourse act, so much commended in the Chronicle, is little better. Unless the administration intend war, they are, except their dishonor and folly, measures of no avail.

I cannot believe our administration intend to fight England. I cannot think of any way Mr. Jefferson has to extricate himself and the country from out this scrape, so eligible as to remonstrate to that court, and to spin out the affair into length, till he feels bold enough to make a British Treaty, if he can, and perhaps the new coalition will be dissipated, and John Bull will be in another year more pliant. My hopes of that coalition are slender, as you know. Austria is hearty in the cause, but wants power. Russia has power, but is not hearty. To reduce France within moderate limits will require an age of battles, and England alone is possessed of the means, and forced to display the courage, to fight them with the necessary perseverance. I expect reverses and disasters, and that Great Britain, now on the high horse, will dismount again. The time will come, therefore, when negotiation may effect much. Menace and the base hostility of confiscation will surely prevent its being effected. I could fill a dozen sheets with speculations, because I should deal in conjectures. I will spare you. Why should one Yankee help another to guess?

The session portends much bustle and debate. I confess I see no prospect of any auspicious issue to it, either as it respects the prosperity or rather security of commerce, or the effect on our public in favor of the old Washington system. Among your friends I shall feel not the coldest, in regard to the impression your public labors may make, being, with unfeigned regard,

Your friend, &c.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, November 29, 1805. — Thanksgiving evening.

My Dear Friend, — N. is better. His leg is yet much swelled, but nearly free from pain, and the doctor hopes no suppuration will ensue. You will rejoice with us, for our revived hopes make a truly joyful Thanksgiving. In every other respect, it is dull enough.

M. and H. are at my mother's, in search of something more cheerful than my house affords. They have fine spirits, and improve, I make no doubt, by their Medford school. My John W. sits by me at his book, "the world forgetting," and enjoying a Thanksgiving feast for his mind. It is true, he reads on such occasions for amusement, but I indulge him, for I hope something will stick to him. The habit of literary labor may be ingrafted on the free stock of literary curiosity. I will not defend my metaphor, but I believe my meaning is expressed clearly by it. A passion for books is never inspired, I believe, *late*, in the breasts of those who, having access to books, do not feel it young. But to apply, to investigate closely, to study, to make the mind work, is a very different thing from a passionate fondness for battles and romances. It is by performing tasks, not by choosing books for their amusement, that boys obtain this power to fix and detain attention.

But is there encouragement in our country to educate boys for any great degree of usefulness? While faction is forging our fetters, the specious talents are more in demand than the solid. But after a tyranny is settled, perhaps our Augustus will have a fancy, that learning is an essential thing to his glory. Nero pretends to be an artist himself, and would feel himself eclipsed by the excellence of another.

Every popular despotism is, I believe, in its inception, base and tasteless. As great geniuses snatch the sceptre from the hands of great little rascals, the government rises, though liberty rises no more. Ours is gone, never to return. To mitigate a tyranny, is all that is left for our hopes. We cannot maintain justice by the force of our constitution; yet,

I think, the spirit of commerce, which cannot be separated from the Yankee mind, is favorable to justice. To guard property by some good rules, is a necessary of life in every commercial state.

But it is foolish, or rather it is presumptuous, to speculate on the untried state of being that our degraded country has to pass through.

> Vestibulum ante ipsum, primoque in limine Ditis
> Luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curæ.

I quote from memory of Virgil's sixth book, perhaps not correctly.[1] The application seems to me fearfully correct. At the threshold of our new state of being, we are to meet the *Luctus et ultrices Curæ.*

I will leave my letter open till morning, to inform you more of N.

Your affectionate friend.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, December 2, 1805.

My Dear Sir, — I have just returned from Boston, where I find the merchants have had a meeting on Mr. Fitzsimons's letter, and appointed a committee of seven.[2] Our friend Cabot is much — too much, mortified that he is one of them. He hates hypocrisy, and respects principles, and he dreads lest the popular feeling should impel the committee to deny what he believes to be true, or to ask for what he knows to be mischievous. I confess I have rather approved the meetings of merchants. Losers will feel and complain; and capricious and fickle as passions are, when they possess a multitude, interest will keep the merchants as

[1] Virgil's words are:

> Vestibulum ante ipsum, primisque in faucibus Orci
> Luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curæ.

[2] On the subject of the condemnations in admiralty in England.

steady as the anchors do their own ships. Besides, this body is not loved nor cherished by our government, and I like to see them claim and take their place as a part of the people. I expect more good than evil from their interposition, especially if such men as Cabot will consent to appear among them. I hope they will be prevailed on soon or late to depute such men as James Lloyd and Thomas H. Perkins to the government, as their committee, who could not fail to impose respect on the Sam Smiths[1] among you.

If party considerations may be admitted, it seems to me a time when the probable hostility and undeniable negligence of our administration, in respect to our commerce, may be made appear. The very hatred of Great Britain, which generally locks up men's minds against argument, will now rouse them to attention. I have not the least doubt, that an early attempt at negotiation would have been successful; and why the attempt was not made, when the British instructions of June, 1808, plainly denounced the now experienced evil, I cannot comprehend on any grounds, but the want of good will or good sense, in regard to the hated and dreaded moneyed or trading interest of the United States. In 1808, Great Britain was alone, and wished help or countenance from any quarter. Then she would have been comparatively pliant. Now she is arrogant, or at least elated with her new allies, who, I think, will not help her long or much. Even yet the chance of negotiation is worth something, and as we can only humbly pray, while others fight, it is worth every thing to us. Negotiation seems to me the object we ought to propose to ourselves. The administration, probably, does not wish to fight, and, least of all, to fight for commerce and for Yankees. Their ignorance may choose hostile measures, supposing them to be equally safe and efficacious. Their malice towards trade may be delighted to hear the *vox populi* calling for its poison. The influence of Bonaparte, whose resentment they dare not rouse, whose aid they still court, whose friends are their friends, may hurry them on to sequester, and other violences. The popular rage may be easily roused against Great Britain; but, if I mistake not

[1] Mr. Smith was a senator from Maryland.

the temper of the country, they love their gain more than they hate England, and therefore peace, and the measures of peace, and a negotiation to preserve it, may be supported on popular grounds. The attempt ought to be made, as it will be right in itself, and is the best defence against the furious rashness of the faction of revolutionists. I know that government possesses the power to move, or to stop moving, in this business. But I think public expectation ought to be steadily and strongly directed to this end. It would not be policy to concede, at once, all that Great Britain claims, even if we should think her claim plausibly well grounded. It seems to me that her practice, during the late war, ought to be urged as her own exposition of her rights; and if she would adjust the matter on that footing, I believe it would be satisfactory to the merchants. I wrote lately to Mr. Quincy on the subject; and I find Mr. Cabot has forwarded by mail my long letter to you. I omitted, to both of you, one remark, which, though perhaps quite unnecessary, I will now subjoin.

The conduct of Great Britain is undoubtedly unpopular, which, in our country, is the test of right and wrong. Inquiry usually stops at that point. I hope the federalists will be very shy, therefore, and cautious how they come out as the avowed apologists for England. It is for our own best interest that we ought to provide; and, that we may be permitted to do it in any degree, I hope the Feds will not needlessly make themselves unpopular, by vindicating the British principles. Waiving such discussion, is it not clear that Mr. Monroe, or the government, neglected all reasonable care of our commercial concerns? And is it not the point for prudence now to ascertain, how our embarrassed trade can be most effectually relieved from the effects of their unexpected operation? I am not to lecture you on these matters; but I well know you hate all evasion and duplicity.

My letter would have been shorter, and much more to the purpose, if I had bestowed more time and meditation upon it.

The *message* is expected, as the raising of the curtain of our political playhouse. With respect and esteem,

Yours, unfeignedly.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, December 16, 1805.

My Dear Sir, — I received this day, and have read with pleasure, your favor of the 6th. The message seems to me ill written, and liable to endless criticism as to its matter. Mr. Jefferson seems to take his ground, that the British principle is wrong, and is to be resisted in every event. When Spain violated a treaty, without any pretext for the violation, then he was for negotiating, pimping, begging, and buying; any thing but fighting. What a difference! How does he know that the British Cabinet claim the principle, as they exercise it of late by their Admiralty Courts? Answer: By their Instructions of June, 1803. Why then did he not long ago remonstrate or negotiate in London? A grain of prevention, say the wise, is worth a ton of remedy.

Suppose the British doctrine right, is it to be met in arms, in "the bloody arena"? Suppose it wrong, is its error not to be exposed by Mr. Monroe's able and spirited notes, before we make resort to measures of compulsion? And do nations undertake to compel other nations, more proud and powerful than themselves, without expecting the game to be shifted from acts of Congress to broadsides? Be it that Great Britain is unjust, yet all men will say the object of our patriots is to preserve our peace and commerce, if they can be preserved with due regard to the dignity of the nation. Angry measures of commercial restriction, in the first resort, seem to throw away both these objects. Why does our Solomon, in the first instance, put down his foot, that Great Britain is unwarranted in her doctrine, unless he means to appeal to the *ultima ratio regum*, and to make that appeal absolutely necessary?

Negotiation is the measure that I should think he would adopt, if even party wisdom guided him. Our federal few ought not, I am sure, to be the advocates of Great Britain, nor yet flinchers from the truth of principles. There are ways of stating the British reasoning, so as to check and confound the jacobin declaimers, without becoming respon-

sible for its conclusions. Yet, I am clear, the folly of prohibitions, sequestration, &c., ought to be strongly exposed; and I verily believe our multitude will not fail to applaud the side of peace and moderation. Our merchants are not thought to be so sanguine now in condemning the British doctrine, as they were three weeks ago. It would be madness to assume, as a *sine qua non* of peace with England, a doctrine that we could not sustain any better in argument than in arms. The federalists not being the responsible men, ought to expose the mischiefs of the measures proposed by the dominant party; and in case such as are recommended by the jacobin gazettes should be brought forward, the task would not be hard.

As to your part, my friend, I wish you to reserve yourself to act as circumstances may require, after the progress of debate has afforded you all the means of being decided. I shall take great pleasure in observing the rise of your reputation; and as I know you love your country with passion, the increase of your influence with your parliamentary experience will be a good omen.

The symptoms of discord among the bad deserve notice. By dividing, their power to destroy will be diminished.

I pray you offer my best wishes to Mrs. Quincy, for herself and the children.

Yours, with unfeigned regard, &c.

TO ELIPHALET PEARSON, LL.D.

Dedham, January 6, 1806.

Sir, — I have received notice through a friendly and authentic, though unofficial, channel, that the Corporation of Harvard College, at a meeting on the 11th December last, unanimously elected me President of that University.

However I may have been accustomed to rate my claim to reputation, I could not fail to perceive the influence of this event to extend and confirm it. I can say, with gratitude,

as well as with unfeigned sincerity, and on due reflection, that, situated as I am in life, and with my habits of thinking, there is no testimonial of public approbation that could be more soothing to my self-love, or, in my conception, more substantially honorable to me, than the suffrages of the learned and truly respectable members of the Corporation.

On the first information I had of the choice, I perceived instantly that it was due to the Corporation, as well as to the members individually, — to the public, as well as to myself, — that I should bestow my most careful thoughts upon the subject; that I should delay my determination till I had revolved every consideration of propriety and duty that ought to influence it; and that as soon as possible after I had thus matured my final decision, and without permitting its disclosure to the public, I should hasten, with equal frankness and respect, to lay it before the Corporation.

I am not unapprised that an informal notice, and especially, too, of an election yet unconfirmed by the Board of Overseers, does not apparently require, though I presume (it) does not forbid, so early an answer. But having at length arrived, after careful and long meditation, to an entire satisfaction of my own mind, as to the kind of answer that I ought to give, I cannot discern any reason, and scarcely any justification, for longer delaying to give it. I am the more urgently impelled to this communication by adverting to the near approach of the session of the legislature, when, as the meeting of the Overseers will be facilitated, I naturally infer it will be convened.

My first and only difficult inquiry was to ascertain what is my duty in this case. I should be unworthy of your very flattering approbation, and should certainly impair my own, if I could resolve to decline the office of President against a clear sense of moral obligation to accept it. Two considerations have, nevertheless, appeared to me to allow that I should decide the question with a perfect liberty of choice. In this widely extended and not unfruitful field of the sciences, it will not be thought an excess, or an affectation of modesty, if I believe, and assume it to be certain, that there is ample room for the selection of a candidate, at least as well qualified for this important office as I can pretend,

or even imagine I am thought, to be. While I view the University as one of the brightest lights and ornaments of our quarter of the globe, I rejoice that its interests are committed to gentlemen whose zeal for their advancement is no less ardent than pure. Am I not, then, warranted to act on the supposition, that such a selection will, of course, be made? To this I can truly add, that the slender health which I have but very recently enjoyed, and which almost every week's experience admonishes me I hold by an unusually frail tenure, has, by God's blessing, slowly accrued by my persisting to renounce almost all the cares, even more apprehensively than the labors, of life. However by your indulgence the labors of the office, if I should enter upon it, might be diminished, the high responsibility, the anxious solicitude, the strenuous exertion inseparable from its duties, would remain, and to these, it is my entire belief, my health would prove inadequate.

As considerations of duty, therefore, are so far from exacting my acceptance of the appointment, that they actually deter me from it, I might, very properly, desist from alleging any further reasons for my decision. I have none of equal force. But I think it will readily occur to every discerning mind, that a man, so far advanced in life as I am, ought to dread as fatal, or at least perilous, to its happiness, so complete a change of all its habits as I must make, if I should be transferred from the position I now occupy, to that more distinguished one which you are pleased to offer me.

I should submit these considerations to you, sir, and to the gentlemen of the Corporation, with no little pain of mind, if I did not anticipate from your known candor and good sense a ready acquiescence in the result to which they have impelled me. Being, therefore, not only permitted, but, as I conceive, constrained, to decline the appointment, to which you have proposed to raise me, I wish it to be explicitly understood, that I do decline it; and may the great Source of wisdom enlighten you in the future election of a President.

I must beg you to communicate this letter, with the expressions of my most grateful respect, to the gentlemen of the Corporation; and allow me to add, that I am, with sentiments of entire esteem, Sir, yours.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, Jannary 20, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — You will find no want of correspondents, and the greater number will exact from you more, in point both of frequency and length of letters, than comports with my notion either of justice or liberty. To write as much as business or common civility requires, is no small task for the representative of the capital of Massachusetts. And I consider too, how unreasonable it is to expect a Congress-man can fill letter after letter with important matter, when your wise body actually brings nothing to pass; and if any thing be intended to be done, you forlorn Feds, who are not allowed to attend the legislative caucus, can know nothing about it. A wanderer on the deserts of Barca, can cull no variety of fruits or flowers. *Apropos*, I liked your amendment of Barca for Lybia. Classical names, when laid aside, are no more to be used than *quidnunc* names never yet adopted, as Doctor Mitchell's Fredonia. I hate Columbia too, because it is not *our* name, nor can all the efforts of all our literary fops bring it into vogue. I wish Congress may learn that giving swords and medals lothly, and by bare majorities, is not conferring honor. In stable governments, usages become laws. Things wear a certain channel for themselves; and if they bear along some abuses in their current, they do not stagnate for want of current. Without a metaphor, habits, if not principles, then govern; whereas, in democracies, prejudices not only subvert every thing that is sacred, but disfigure every thing that is decent. The discussion of the question of "*Thank you, General Eaton*," is both rudeness and ingratitude. Is Eaton a hearty federalist? Is he, on that account, obnoxious to the ruling Virginians? Is Lear a favorite with them?

Mr. Jefferson's message indicates that he looks to Congress as the fountain of power. He says and unsays, and seems to be willing to stand to any thing that the two houses will signify they would have him say. This is the natural course for the head of a party; he evades responsibility.

When the seal of secrecy is broken, we expect to know what Congress, acting in the diplomatic line, will do. If confiscation, non-importation, &c., should be agreed to, the seventh seal will be broken — the seventh vial poured out; and as the woes denounced in that event will reach the workers of iniquity, I cannot think our rulers will be passionately fond of the project. When the time allowed by fate arrives, I, as one of the people, shall be glad to know what is to be done, and who are the agents of the great political work. Is Randolph really in discredit, as the gazettes allege? Is Bidwell viewed by this grand seignior as a brother too near the throne? Who is Clinton? not De Witt. Is Brown, of Delaware, as fine a fellow as Bayard? While you are seeing the play, I, who have no ticket, should like to know the *dramatis personæ* a little better. If you should think fit to send a page or two of "federal scurrility," I will put it into the fire. I must be allowed to read it first, to know that it is scurrility.

The answers to my questions may not fill more than a quire or two of paper; and as federal members have not the least concern with the deliberative business of Congress, the work of filling those quires may keep you busy, but cannot interrupt your discharge of duty. Without banter, I claim nothing from you as a correspondent, neither punctuality, nor frequency, nor quantity, nor labor; but observe, as a friend, I am not willing to abate any of my pretensions to your remembrance and regard. In the full exercise of them, I beg leave to assure you of the esteem with which I am, dear sir, Yours, truly.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, January 28, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — I have had it in my thoughts to examine the question of our right to trade with the revolted part of Saint Domingo, as it is laid down in books. And

I well know, that to meddle with it in a loose way is peculiarly improper in a letter to you, who spare no pains to get at truth, and hold every substitute for it in contempt. Nevertheless, as I perceive I shall be occupied on some turnpike business, and hindered from reading writers on the law of nations, I feel a desire to communicate such thoughts as rise uppermost.

Nations very properly abstain from assuming the decision of questions of right between any two contending powers. Facts alone are regarded. When, therefore, one state claims from another subjection and obedience, which that other refuses to yield, and maintains its refusal by successful arms, no third power will constitute itself the judge of the legitimacy of its reasons for so refusing. The actual possession of independence is ground enough for holding a state independent of right, as far as third parties are concerned nationally. I mean, that the trade to such a self-made new state, is not a national offence against the power claiming sovereignty over the revolted country. This intercourse is at the peril of the private individuals concerned, whose cargoes may be seized and confiscated by the cruisers of the offended nation. But their so continuing to trade, seems not obviously to implicate the nation to which the traders belong, unless that nation, or its government, should do some act, whereby such responsibility is assumed. For the greater clearness, I will put a case. The Dutch assumed independence in 1570 or '80. While this event was recent, and the contest depending, the Dutch cities suffering sieges, and the armies of Spain superior in the field in Holland, the supply of arms by Queen Elizabeth was, of course, an act of aggression. But for a London merchant to send flour or sugar at the risk of capture by the Spaniards, it seems to me, would not amount to an act of intermeddling by the English government; especially, I will add, if the queen had, by proclamation, apprised her subjects, that a civil war raged in Holland, in which she would take no part; and that she forbade her subjects trading with the Dutch, on the peril of capture, as aforesaid, by the Spaniards, in which case she would not claim restitution, nor afford protection to the captured. The war would then proceed by Spain against English traders;

and the supplies poured into Holland would afford no ground for hostilities against England. But after the Spanish armies were beaten out of the country, and the lapse of near thirty years without any effort to subdue the Dutch, the capture of such vessels would be apparently unjust.

Whether the suspension of the efforts of France to recover Saint Domingo, merely because of the war with England, amounts to an abandonment of the colony, is questionable. There is, in fact, no doubt she intends to resume the business, as soon as the *mare clausum* becomes once more a *mare liberum*, by a peace with Great Britain. *Ad interim*, any national act of intermeddling, on the part of the United States, in favor of Dessalines, would be an aggression. Permitting the use of force against French captures may possibly be unwarrantable. But the declaring, by Mr. Jefferson's proclamation, that traders taken in such commerce will not be protected; in other words, that they traffic with Dessalines at their peril, — that is, the peril of capture by the French, — I should think, would exculpate our government and nation, on principle.

For Congress to legislate, seems to me quite another thing. It is *ex abundantia*, it is more than France can properly require. If Mr. Jefferson should issue a proclamation, declaring the trade unauthorized, and at the peril of the concerned, it would be left to the French to enforce the law as it now exists, by capturing the vessels, if they can. But for us to extend, or create rights and remedies for them; to say, you cannot catch these wrongdoers, but we can and will, seems to be journey-work for Bonaparte. As I premised, it quits the ground of matter of fact for perplexing theories. If the power of France is not adequate to exclude Saint Domingo from the exercise of its independence, it has just the same right, the right of the strongest, to independence, that other nations found their exercise of it upon. It is already *de facto*, and of course *de jure*, independent.

On the other hand, if France has means to cut off the trade of that island, and to capture the vessels concerned in it, let her use those means. We abandon our traders to capture.

Thus the question is left to work its own peaceable

decision, without compromitting the tranquillity, dignity, or rights of either the United States or France. Has the latter any right beyond the foregoing, that is, to a public disclaimer by proclamation of all protection to those concerned in trading, and to a faithful forbearance to form treaties, or afford any aid, as a government, to the black emperor? Is not the request, or rather insolent claim, of more than this, an admission that Saint Domingo is lost to France, and that the United States must turn the war into a blockade to starve the blacks into submission? Is it not saying to us, We do not merely ask your forbearance, we insist on your coöperation; you must meddle, but only on our side?

If my ideas are made intelligible, they seem to me of some use to discriminate the line of right and duty in the case, which line, perhaps, is to admit, that the French have rights, and leave them to exercise them as they now exist, but to refuse legislating for extending those rights or enforcing them by our power.

As to the line of policy, I can scarcely doubt, that we ought to shun a quarrel with France upon the point, if France contents herself with claiming no more than an existing right, and the enforcing it by capturing the vessels in the trade. If she claims more from the United States as a vassal, our dignity should be temperately asserted, and her demand civilly but firmly refused. We ought by no means to commit ourselves to the discredit of a treaty with Dessalines, or in any way to intermeddle as a government. But we ought to wish most earnestly, that Hayti may maintain its independence; and so much the more, as the colonial systems of all nations may be expected on a peace to abridge our intercourse with the dependent islands.

I have run the risk to write these crude conceptions as fast as I can drive my quill, and I can assure you, I shall feel no mortification, if it should turn out, that I commit several mistakes in the argument. I am, dear sir, with unfeigned esteem, Yours, &c.

P. S. It occurs to me to add, that there is some, though I am aware, not a close analogy between the case of our trade with Hayti and the revenue laws of foreign nations.

To enforce these, one state never asks legislative or any other aid from another. Yet smuggling is an evil. I know it has been said, that the reason for this mutual forbearance is, that revenue laws are merely municipal, and create neither right nor obligation out of the territory for which they were made.

But, as a matter of right, we equally abstain from the question depending in arms between the two emperors, Dessalines and Napoleon. The fact that Saint Domingo once acknowledged, and now refuses to acknowledge, the supreme authority of France, is all that we know, or will, if we are wise, concern ourselves to know. The rights claimed by France are merely, that we shall not intermeddle in the contest; not that we shall help her.

Justice requires that I should make it understood, that I claim from you no answers to my communications. I would sooner suppress such of my letters, than have them operate to impose a task on you.

TO THOMAS DWIGHT.

Dedham, February 1, 1806.—Saturday.

My Dear Friend,—All habits grow stronger as we grow older; and I am sorry to find that the bad habit of neglecting to write to you becomes more inveterate by indulgence. I condemn myself for it, and go round the beaten circle of resolving to do better in future. But what avail wise *saws* against foolish propensities?

Happening to be in the office, pen and ink before me, and expecting your brother J. this evening, I say to myself, nick the moment, and write, or you will persist in your sins, and aggravate them by your fruitless repentance. Conscience, which will sometimes meddle against old sinners, speaks out, contrary to custom, with some authority, and I obey.

These few lines come to let you know, that I am very well, sickness excepted, as I hope you are, without exception,

at this present writing. Want of exercise brings want of appetite that furs my tongue and dulls my wits. I sleep worse, and yet am a sleepy fellow; and, on the whole, have ground for two dozen complaints about my health, and not one new apprehension.

Why did you not invite me to visit Springfield? That omission, some care of our ever-depending turnpike, the depth of the snow, and its faithless appearance in this thawy weather, banish or retard the project I wish to ripen and execute of going with my one-horse cutter to your town. Why should I not? Do I not want some of your large pepper seed? The dry season forbade mine to ripen. Do I not want to see your great bridge? Do I not want to drink your cider, which article is scarce here? How reasons thicken in my catalogue. Yet as they govern me just as little as they do the rest of this stubborn, unreasonable world, I think it probable I shall not go; and that, on the aforesaid grounds, it is much more proper that you and your good wife should come here, although you could not find one of the reasons for it that I have urged in my own case.

As you would not come for pepper seed, nor to drink cider, nor to see the Dedham canal up Charles river, which is not to be seen, I will readily admit that you both come to see Mrs. A. and your humble servant. I will not enlarge on the weight these last motives would have with any other good people, but my vanity stiffly maintains that they have influence with you. Indeed it founds itself a good deal on such kind of pretensions.

Sir, I was elected President — not of the United States; and do you know why I did not accept? I had no inclination for it. The health I have, would have been used up at Cambridge in a year. My old habits are my dear comforts, and these must have been violently changed.

How much I was in a scrape in consequence of the offer, and with what three weeks' mystery and address I extricated myself, are themes for conversation when we meet. I have extricated myself, and feel like a truck or stage horse, who is once more allowed to roll in the dirt without his harness. Everybody has heard of Mrs. A.'s proposing that I should take H. A., if I went to Cambridge, as *she* would neither go nor learn Greek.

Apropos of Hannah Adams. Her abridgment of her History of New England, for the use of schools, has, I believe, superior merit. I have read a chapter, and, after reading more, shall put my name to the recommendation of the work. Young ...., and others, friends to modest merit, have bought the whole of her first edition, and a second is preparing. I wish to see it in use.

Are you sharp-shooters of Hampshire ready to get the bounty for Englishmen's scalps? .....'s intemperate folly shows the temper of the ruling party. If a step should be stirred onward in that path, we are plump in a war. I have hoped that the sacred shield of cowardice, as Junius calls it, would protect our peace. I still hope. Yet this tongue-courage is a bad omen. If we assert rights that we cannot maintain by argument, and that we will not enforce by arms, what follows from our so early putting down our foot — so positively stating that Britain usurps our rights, and that we never will abandon them? What, I say, but an increased and a very unnecessary propensity on both sides to war; an indisposition to negotiation, "the only umpire between just nations;" and a tenfold disgrace, if we tamely forbear to enforce our claims, or explicitly renounce them? In point of true dignity or common prudence, this preliminary engagement of our government to be inflexible seems singularly absurd. Mr. Madison's great pamphlet on the maritime principle of Great Britain, however plausible and ingenious, is an indiscreet pledge of the government, and of the public opinion, to maintain what we know England will not concede, and we will not enforce.

I could subjoin, that the chief labor of Madison is to show that Great Britain has no right from old treaties nor from old writers. He might as well show that neither Aristotle nor the laws of Solon make any mention of such a principle. A new state of things exists, and a new case requires a new application of old principles. Here, I strongly apprehend, the decision will be against us at "the bar of reason," where Mr. Jefferson, like the crier, summons Mr. Pitt to appear and answer. How is it possible for Great Britain to defend herself, without the utmost use of her navy? And how can she use her navy with any effect against her deadly enemy, if she leaves his colony trade free to neutrals, and thereby

makes that immense fund of wealth cheaply accessible to France? I confess, I know not. But why do I bore you with a prize question?

N. continues to mend. We are all well. Thank you for more of Doctor Lathrop. Remember me to all friends, especially to those of your household. A kiss for little Bess.

Yours, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, February 1, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — The proprietors of the stage through Dedham to Hartford have procured a list of subscribers to a petition to Congress, that the Postmaster-General may be required, by law, to cause a mail to be carried, three times a week, on that road. Being a Dedham and a turnpike man, I premise that I am an interested witness. Still I come forward to testify, that reasons exist to recommend their petition, which others will allow to have force.

This great extent of country is destitute of information, except by a slow creeping mail on horseback once a week; and as all information is admitted by our rulers to come through newspapers, the people may be supposed to be in a benighted condition, being too, for half the distance, Connecticut folks. The request may possibly awaken the town patriotism of Mr. Granger, and the Worcester men may feel as if their preëminence, as to the mail, would be attacked. You know the middle road; it is the nearest. The stage is supported with spirit, and in excellent order; and I should think the expense of a mail need not be very great to our economical government, as the stage runs without it. While it is better for the public that the mail should go in the stage, I suppose it is nearly essential to the future success of the proprietors of the line, that they should get the contract. They promise great expedition. A turnpike is made, or granted, the whole distance, and the due improvement of the road, where it wants any, depends on the arrangement in

question, as without it, the want of enterprise and want of means, which so long obstruct improvements, will retard this.

I shall be informed by getting my Boston newspaper with my breakfast; and yet I cannot suppose that accommodation, singly taken, would induce our loving administration to spend many dollars on the contract. Be this as it may, I have made a promise to Messrs. Trask and Wheelock, the stage owners, in Boston, that I will use my influence in promoting their project. This influence I was obliged to leave them at liberty to believe very considerable, otherwise I could not have resisted their importunate request to put my name to their petition.

They did not seem to comprehend why my name would create them opposition. I did comprehend it, as I believe you will. Will you then allow me to assign over these men and their affair to your attention and friendly patronage. Having been at the head of the department, you ought to have more influence than I claim. I am, with esteem, &c.

Yours, truly.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, February 1, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — Messrs. Trask and Wheelock, two knights of the currycomb in Bromfield lane, and proprietors of the stage through Dedham to Hartford, from a sheer love to the public, are willing to use and abuse their horses to expedite the mail in eighteen hours in summer, provided that Congress will order the Postmaster-General to make a contract with them to carry it three times a week. Even love, you know, grows faint if unrequited. Here we sit in darkness; and instead of having the light of the newspapers, the only light men can see to think by, shed dingy and streaked every morning, like Aurora, we often have to wait, as they do in Greenland, for the weather and the northern lights. The

town stage is often stopped by rain or snow; the driver forgets to bring the newspapers, or loses them out of his box. This is our bad condition here. How much worse it is ten miles farther from Boston, you may conceive. The darkness might be felt. Now, as the government alone possesses information, and as the stage-horses alone are the pipes for its transmission to the printers, who are the issuing commissaries to the people, we, the people, the rank-and-file men, ask our officers, through Trask and Wheelock, to provide for our accommodation. Let us have food for the mind every other day.

The middle road is the nearest, by twenty or twenty-five miles; besides Mr. Dowse lives upon it, and as it is now all turnpike, in fact or on paper, and as fifty miles of it through Connecticut, without granting the petition, might not in any season, if at all, get knowledge of Mr. Wright's bill, and his bounty for shooting Englishmen, the public reasons are the strongest imaginable for ordering the Postmaster-General to make such a contract. It would not cost much; and as the increase of mails increases letter-writing, who will say that ultimately it will cost any thing? The only sensible economy in farming is to spend money; it may be so in government matters.

To be serious, there can be no doubt the public good requires the arrangement in question, as Sam Brown, George Blake, and Dr. Eustis subscribe the petition. The Worcester road may seem to be attacked, by the conferring the high prerogative of a mail three times a week on a parallel road; and Granger's bowels may yearn for his imperial city of feathers and wooden trays, which is situated on the route through Springfield. Pray do what you can for these folks, and get others to help you. Even Mr. Randolph ought to promote these views, as it will, no doubt, increase the number of the readers of his speeches.

Yours, truly, &c.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, February 12, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — Your highly esteemed favor, of 27th January, reached me on the 8th, and that of the 30th January, on the 10th February. Shall I say they give me pleasure? I had curiosity to pry into the books of the fates, and your answers are like those of the ancient interpreters of those books, to inquirers predestined to ruin, — a terrible satisfaction of curiosity. I had hoped our feeble chief would have done nothing, and left time and chance to work for our country. But Gregg,[1] or the evil one, will not let us profit by events. Our folly must meddle, and hasten our destruction. Non-intercourse surely needs no exposure as a folly. Admit its inefficacy, it is proved. Admit its efficacy, will Great Britain wait to have it manifested? She can bear a war as well as we; non-intercourse, say they, worse. The option is for her to make, which she will bear. Park exposes it well in his Repertory. I sit at home, and mope, ignorant of any effects of Congress's extravagance on prices. I have not seen George Cabot, to whom I will show your favors.

The conquest of Europe seems already achieved by Bonaparte, if we may believe French accounts. I do not believe them without great allowances, yet, truly, I see little means and less spirit of resistance left there. England would merit ruin, if she accepted peace, and took it quietly. Russia surely has force enough untouched; but distance, want of money, and blockheads in the cabinet, for they glide in through every keyhole, may incline her (I can scarcely think it) to quit "the bloody arena." In case Europe accepts peace and chains, we, of the United States, are ripe and rotten for servitude and tribute. Bonaparte would have no need to pull trigger. Disguise the name, and we shall furnish our quota as cheerfully as Italy or Spain. If Burr goes and finds Bonaparte triumphant, Jefferson has a master,

[1] Mr. Gregg, of Pennsylvania, had proposed resolutions for the non-importation of goods, of British production.

and the United States a prefect. In point of military preparation, we are scarcely a match for the Mamelukes, or even the cooks of the world's emperor; and our one hundred thousand militia would do little more in the field than the tailors that make their uniforms. Prussia has probably fallen like a forest tree, not by cutting it down, or prying up its roots, but by felling the neighboring trees that sheltered and propped it. The backwoodsmen will tell you that such trees fall, because the very zephyrs that fan their leafy tops loosen their foundations. Yet these woodsmen are our legislators, and make our commerce not the object to contend for, but the weapon to contend with. This is certain, if England cannot save Europe, we cannot save ourselves. The spirit that would buy rights when Spain violates them, would pay tribute when France offers land to disguise it. I have long thought a democracy incapable of liberty. It seems now almost impossible that we should long enjoy the honor and happiness of a tyrant of our own.

Company interrupts, and I will finish my croakings. Please to offer my best wishes and respects to Mrs. Quincy.

Yours, truly.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, February 14, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — I have sent your letters to Mr. Cabot, who, I am sure, will think their contents as interesting as I do. Indeed, "they suit the gloomy habit of my soul," as Young says in his Zanga. I am infinitely dejected with the view of Europe, as well as of our own country; and I begin to consider the utmost extreme of public evils as more dreadfully imminent than ever I did before in my life. I have long consoled myself with believing that the germs of political evil, as well as of good, lie long, like the unnumbered seeds of every species of plants, in the ground without sprouting; and that it was unnecessary and unwise to contemplate the possibilities of national servitude, and, more

properly, of universal convulsion and ruin under a French empire, as either very near or very probable. Late events, I confess, lessen my confidence in the military capacity of resistance of all the foes of France, England not excepted. A fate seems to sweep the prostrate world along that is not to be averted by submission, nor retarded by arms. The British navy stands like Briareus, parrying the thunderbolts, but can hurl none back again; and if Bonaparte effects his conquest of the dry land, the empire of the sea must in the end belong to him. That he will reign supreme and alone on the Continent is to be disputed by nobody but Russia; and if pride, poverty, distance, false ambition, or fools in his cabinet persuade the Emperor Alexander to make a separate peace, France must be Rome, and Russia, Parthia, invincible and insignificant. The second Punic war must terminate in that case, for aught I can see, in the ruin of England; and the world must bow its base neck to the yoke. It will sweat in servitude and grope in darkness, perhaps another thousand years; for the emulation of the European states, extinguished by the establishment of one empire, will no longer sustain the arts. They and the sciences will soon become the corrupters of society. It is already doubtful whether the press is not their enemy.

I make no doubt, Bonaparte will offer almost *carte blanche* to Russia and Austria, saving only his rights as master; and I greatly fear that Russia will be lured, as Austria will be forced, to abandon Great Britain. Another peace makes Bonaparte master of Europe.

Russia has soldiers, and they are brave enough; and I should think so vast an augmentation of the French empire would seem to Alexander to demand the exertion of all his vast energies. Without Pitt's gold, this will be a slow and inadequate exertion; and how Pitt is to get money, if neutrals take this generous opportunity to quarrel with him, I cannot see.

If we intend to quarrel and to assert our rights in arms, it may be wise and right to take up our cause as we do; for if England will not recede, we cannot honorably, — which last word, I well know, is a mere expletive, of no more import than a semicolon, or rather an interjection. If we

resolve that Great Britain shall fight or yield, and that the United States will sooner fight than yield, it is all of a piece to argue and bluster as we do. But on the hypothesis, that we mean peace in every event, the folly of this prompt assumption of our ultimatum is strange. I am the more ready to think it so, because I expect to hear John Bull say, he is as little convinced as afraid. Like a good citizen, I am silent while our side is argued; but I am far from thinking it impossible that the question should appear to the candid and intelligent to have another side. If it has, I abstain from all insult and reproach, and from all feelings of indignation against Great Britain for her alleged "interpolations." On one point, her condemning without notice, I think her culpable, and that if an envoy like Mr. King were sent, she would refund.

It is ever a misfortune for a man to differ from the political or religious creed of his countrymen. You will not fail to perceive, that I am worse than a lingerer in my faith in the conclusiveness of the reasoning of Mr. Madison & Co. This, however, I keep to myself and less than half a dozen friends. As you seem to be more orthodox than I am on this article, I am the more ready to applaud your generous and just sentiments in favor of the British cause against France.

It has never happened, I believe, for any great length of time, that our American politics have been much governed either by our policy or blunders. Events abroad have imposed both their character and result; and I see no reason to doubt that this is to be the case more than ever. If France dictates by land and sea, we fall without an effort. The wind of the cannon-ball that smashes John Bull's brains out, will lay us on our backs with all our tinsel honors in the dirt. Therefore I think I may, and feel that I must, return to European affairs.

Two obstacles, and only two, impede the establishment of universal monarchy: Russia and the British navy. The military means of the former are vast, her troops numerous and brave. Of money she has little, but a little goes a great way, for every thing is cheap. This is owing to the barbarism of her inhabitants. Now, for revenue, a highly civilized

state is most favorable; but for arms, I beg leave to doubt whether men half savage are not best. Not because rude nations have more courage than those that are polished, but because they have not such an invincible aversion to a military life as the sons of luxury and pleasure, and the sons of labor too, in the latter. As society refines, greater freedom of the choice of life is progressively allowed; and the endless variety of employments and arts of life attaches men, and almost all the men, to the occupations of peace. To bring soldiers into the field, the prince must overbid the allurements of these occupations. He exhausts his treasury without filling his camp.

But in Russia men are yet cheap, as well as provisions. Little is left to the peasantry to choose, whether they will stand in the ranks or at a work-bench; and though the emperor may not incline absolutely to force men into the army, a sum of money, that John Bull would disdain to accept, would allure them in crowds. Russia in Asia is thinly settled; but Russia in Europe is the seat of five sixths of the inhabitants of the empire, and not very deficient in populousness, if we consider the extent of unimprovable lands, and the little demand for manufacturing labor. With thirty millions in Europe, Russia is surely able to withstand Bonaparte; and the latter will not long forbear to say to *ci-devant* Poland, "shake off your chains, rise to liberty and fraternity." Prussia and Austria could say nothing against this; but Russia could not and would not acquiesce in it.

I amuse myself with inquiring into the existence of physical means to resist France. I seem to forget, though in truth I do not forget, that means twice as great once existed in the hands of the fallen nations. They were divided in counsel, and taken unprepared. Russia being a single power, and untainted with revolution mania, and plainly seeing her danger, ought to do more than all the rest. Yet, after all, I well know that if small minds preside on great occasions, they are sure to temporize when the worst of all things is to do nothing; and very possibly the Russian cabinet sages partake of this fatal blockheadship.

It also seems to me that the science, or at least the practice, of war has greatly changed since Marlborough's days.

In 1702 to 1709, or 1710, he fought a great battle on a plain of six miles extent. On gaining the victory, he besieged a fortress as big as an Indian trading post, mined, scaled, battered, and fought six weeks to take it, and then went into winter quarters. Thus the war went on campaign after campaign, as slowly as the Middlesex canal, which in eight years has been dug thirty miles.

The French have done with sieges and field-battles. Posts are occupied along the whole frontier line of a country. If the line of defence be less extensive, they pass round it; if weakened by extent, through it. An immense artillery, light, yet powerful, rains such a horrible tempest on any part that is to be forced, that the defenders are driven back before the charge of the bayonet is resorted to. The lines once forced, the defending army falls back, takes new positions, and again loses them as before. Thus a country is taken possession of without a battle, and a brave people wonder and blush to find they are slaves.

Is not this invariable and yet always surprising result owing to the number, spirit, and discipline of the French, and to their almost irresistible superiority of artillery? No arts being regarded, every Frenchman is a soldier, if his master chooses to call him into the ranks. Military means are, therefore, infinite. Success and the national character have supplied the spirit to animate this mass. The opposers of France can have no such means. Men enjoying liberty will not march as if they were soldiers without their consent. They are to be bought and paid for at a dear rate before they will march. Of course government can command means to buy only a few of them;—a scanty force is collected, impatient of discipline, pining for their return to their homes, easily discouraged and dispersed. Why then should we wonder to see France mistress of Europe?

On these grounds of advantage on the side of France, I have long deemed the fate of Europe fixed irreversibly, unless other nations can be made almost as military as she is; and I confide less than ever in the possibility of this change, or at least, within the term when it could avail for resistance.

I have never believed the volunteers of England worth a

day's rations of beef to the island, if invaded. With you, I have assumed it, as a thing absolutely certain, that they would be beaten and dispersed by one hundred thousand invading Frenchmen. Improved as the military art now is, and, as I have supposed, far beyond what it was in the Duke of Marlborough's days, it is folly at all times, and infatuation in time of danger, to consider militia as capable of defending a country. My hope has been that England would array two hundred and fifty thousand regulars, and perfect their discipline without delay. Without a great land force, I now think with you, she is in extreme danger.

After her fall, ours would not cost Bonaparte a blow. We are prostrate already, and of all men on earth the fittest to be slaves. Even our darling avarice would not make a week's resistance to tribute, if the name were disguised; and I much doubt whether, if France were lord of the navies of Europe, we should reluct at that, or even at the appellation and condition of Helots.

I write too fast to avoid mistakes, or to correct them. You, I know, will overlook them, inasmuch as you permit me to subscribe myself Your unfeigned friend, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, March 3, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — When I wrote to you, not long since, on the affairs of Europe, I was under more political dejection than I remember ever to have felt before in my life. The news then was that the Russian army had capitulated, and was to be sent home; that Austria had made a separate peace, and of course that Europe, England excepted, was conquered. Assuming those facts, universal monarchy would be no thing of speculation. It would be as real at Washington, as at Berlin, Madrid, or Amsterdam. Thank kind Heaven, still the protector of this spiritless country, the Russian bayonets are long, and the French had four inches

of them in their vitals before they could reach their antagonists. Still I fear that the Lisbon story of the French victory on the 9th December, will turn out true.[1] Even if true, I do not despair; for so many rumors concur in announcing the accession of Prussia to the coalition, that I more than half believe it. If the military powers still contend, the loss or gain of a battle is nothing in my eyes. The longer they contend, the better will be the exercise for all the virtues that sprout and blossom and bear fruit in the emulation of states, and that wither and rot when one subdues the rest.

The morbid cause of the French Revolution lies deep; it is not a rash on the skin; it is a plague that makes the bones brittle and cankers the marrow. The disease is not medicable. The world must wait for a sound generation to be born, and war must educate them in all the ancient manly virtues, before there can be peace or security. As to liberty we are to have none — democracy will kindle its own hell, and consume in it. Our independence may be, and I now begin to think it will be, preserved, by the French being rendered as incapable of usurping as we are of defending it. In a democracy, factions hate none but rival factions. A foreign enemy may happen to be, indeed must be, the friend of one of them. We are capable of resisting, but we should no more be permitted to resist, than Switzerland was. With these conceptions, I am ready to believe our folly is as impotent as our spirit or our wisdom, and that we shall not enjoy the honor and happiness of being able to undo ourselves. We shall try, and in the work of ruin, no men are more efficient than the weak men. Yet with all these advantages and dispositions, I think we shall have a chance to be saved if Europe is. I smile, therefore, at the drawn dagger, and defy the point of Sam Smith's and Crowninshield's resolutions.[2] They may have some stage effect upon our mob. But John Bull, though he may be

[1] The Russian bayonets did not prove quite long enough. The Lisbon story was the first rumor of the battle of Austerlitz, and was true in all but the date.

[2] Resolutions proposing commercial restrictions, by way of retaliation, against the aggressions of Great Britain.

nettled, will scorn to let the world see he is angry, with their playhouse thunder. I can scarcely be justified in noticing the reported intention of buying Florida after what I have intimated of the insignificance of our domestic politics. If the multitude ever paid any regard to merit in the choice of a favorite, I should expect that the exposure of the folly of our land bargains would shake their First Consul out of his triumphal car into the mine. All that can be done by displaying the truth, which is very little, ought to be done as soon as the facts may be used for the purpose. Such a display might, and I think would, influence some votes on our approaching election for Governor, &c. Much exertion will be used on both sides. If Sullivan should be chosen, what can we say more than that vice and folly have taken their natural ascendant?

The terms of our correspondence are, I know, exceedingly in my favor; for I am a rustic, and you a statesman forced to be a spectator, if not allowed to be an actor, in the political drama. I write because I would not be ungrateful, and your obliging acceptance of my letters is a fresh obligation. I refrain, however, from what some would think compliments, as I know you do not like such light commodities.

I am, with entire esteem and regard, dear sir,

Yours, truly.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, March 10, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — I receive your letters so often and in such a series, that there is not the least doubt of their all reaching me. How undeserving am I, that I have left you in doubt on this head! It is, however, some consolation, if not excuse to me, that Mr. Cabot is as negligent as I have been. He has repeatedly shewn me your letters, and that in particular to which you allude with some concern lest it should have miscarried. They are full of matter,

valuable and interesting; and if I had been an admirer of the administration, your well-drawn pictures of their poverty of intellect and spirit, would oblige me to despise them as ordinary knaves, who happen to be in a situation to do more than ordinary mischief. With power, they are base and abject; and with cowardice and ignorance, they are odious. If any one should doubt the exact justice of this character, their unspeakable servility in the St. Domingo business would fully establish it. In case the Russians arrive in season to check Bonaparte, and the King of Prussia really joins the coalition, all these condescensions will appear as unwise as dastardly.

Towards Great Britain, it seems, we have courage enough to swagger. Wright's motion, so worthy of a Mohawk, will convince Europeans, that we are savages, and perhaps revolutionists. I lament the disgrace of the Senate in so far allowing it countenance. There was a time when John Bull would strike, because we make such mouths at him. He, poor fellow, is bound to keep the peace, and, I feared six weeks ago, to sit in the stocks. Sending Burr[1] will not alienate the people from the administration. They need not fear the moral sense, or sense of honor, or any other sense of our people, except their nonsense, which they will take special good care to keep on their side.

The discords of your democratic leaders will raise hopes of good, for the federalists are stubborn hopers. Randolph, no longer the guest of the great man's private board, no longer his earwig, will not be his antagonist. If he is, he will lose his party and his influence. These people may disagree about the manner or even the extent of doing mischief, but to do good they have neither inclination nor understanding. Our disease is democracy. It is not the skin that festers — our very bones are carious, and their marrow blackens with gangrene. Which rogues shall be first, is of no moment — our republicanism must die, and I am sorry for it. But why should we care what sexton happens to be in office at our funeral. Nevertheless, though I indulge no hopes, I derive much entertainment from the squabbles in

[1] A mission of this gentleman to Great Britain was talked of at that time.

Madam Liberty's family. After so many liberties have been taken with her, I presume she is no longer a *miss* and a virgin, though she may still be a goddess.

It is a mark of a little mind in a great man, to get such people about him for favorites as our chief is said to prefer. Hancock thought himself a Jupiter, and filled his Olympus with buffoons, sots, and blockheads. Is our Jupiter to reign another term of four years? I am at a loss to comprehend his ardent passion for buying territory. Is he land-mad, or is he afflicted with a gunpowder-phobia? Admitting that we must either buy the Spanish right or take it, reasons of the day may decide in favor of buying; but a million mischiefs will grow out of this enlargement of our territory, and some of them at no great distance.

I am flattered agreeably by finding, that you and Mr. Bayard approve my opinions respecting St. Domingo. I have never seen that gentleman, but I have, as everybody here has, a very high respect for his merit and talents. I lament, that they are so much lost to our country, which, you know, is destined to the grasp of all its vice and ambition, the ambition of its low tyrants.

You will read that Professor Webber is chosen President of the College, and I hear that it is in print that Mr. Pearson has resigned.

Our election will excite at least as much zeal and bustle as ever. We live in the island of Lemnos, and in Vulcan's own shop; it seems as if we had no business but to forge party thunderbolts. We maintain, that there is as much honor as noise in this happy situation, but surely we cannot deceive ourselves so far as to suppose there ever will be any tranquillity.

The District of Maine, I fear, grows yearly worse and worse. If that part of the State could stand neuter, Massachusetts proper would be right some years longer. Either we ought to dismember that territory, reserving perhaps the extreme part of it, where the State lands, yet unsold, chiefly lie, for a second State, or we should make the most unremitted exertions to federalize it. I have some faith in at least the partial success of the latter, if the expense of pamphlets and newspapers could be amply supplied. I believe

Strong will be chosen, because I wish it, and because I think great industry will be exerted to effect it.

Mason's strange scheme of the portraits of the three Presidents, is, I suppose, left to die. Your comment is very just.

How numerous are the foes of order, and how incorrect as well as faint-hearted are its friends! With respect and unfeigned regard, I am, dear sir,

Yours, truly.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, March 19, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — The news from Europe is truly distressing.[1] The death of Mr. Pitt fills me with grief and terror, — with grief, that so great a statesman and patriot should sink under his labors — and with terror, that Fox, Erskine, and Sheridan should come into power. A neighbor of mine, well known to you as a good-hearted man, is overjoyed that Billy Pitt is dead. He also exults in the prospect of Sullivan's election, whose morals, he says, are purity itself. You will not be at a loss to conjecture who it is I mean. When a man of so much real worth is so deluded, as to rejoice that Pitt is dead, and that Sullivan lives to be Governor, as he believes, what reason have we to think the people will see their error, when they commit any, and return to the right path? I wish to learn from you, how our Congress patriots are affected, by the successes of Bonaparte, and the peace he has dictated. Are they silly or base enough to believe his success is our success? The newspapers inform us that Mr. Randolph has denounced the administration and Bonaparte. But I have read no speech, or part of a speech, from that gentleman, nor have I lately had a line from any correspondent, on the state of Congress

[1] The victory of Austerlitz, and its immediate consequences.

business. I am therefore quite in the dark about your politics. The discords of your Randolphs and Bidwells can do no harm to their betters, or the cause of good order. But I can scarcely believe they will part so widely, as not to come together, and unite again heartily, when any signal mischief is to be done. Of all descriptions of political men, I most profoundly dread the fools. Randolph is immature in judgment as a statesman, and perhaps has too much impetuosity and fancy, ever to ripen into one. But he is no fool, and if he ever consents to promote mischief, he will know what he is doing. I am far from sure that I rightly comprehend his character, and for that reason I the more freely disclose to you my opinion of it. It will be a topic of conversation, when I shall again be so happy as to see you.

You have often mentioned, in your letters, the subject of the election of a President of Harvard College. I have no reserves with my friends, but I can communicate very little, as to the reasons that determined me not to accept it, that you will not anticipate; I want health for it. I also want the most indispensable of all talents, inclination for it. Mr. Webber is chosen. He has, it is said, great learning in the mathematics, and great modesty.

Is Iruco's refusal to quit the United States deemed a correct thing in point of diplomatic principle?[1] It is indeed singular that a foreign minister should thus take post in a country, and intrench himself as a citizen. I have never looked at a book, nor revolved the matter enough to form any conclusion.

Yours, truly.

[1] The Spanish government had been requested to recall Irujo, the minister from that nation to this country. He somewhat cavalierly refused to go, although notified by Mr. Madison that his presence at Washington "was dissatisfactory to the President."

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, March 24, 1806.—Monday.

My Dear Sir, — I had three days ago your favor of the 11th inst. The mail this morning brought your precious communications of the same date, the four sheets no date, the letter of the 18th, and Mr. White's speech. In that of the 11th, first received, I had the pamphlet of Nicklin and Griffith, to which you have added the United States Gazette, containing additional documents in that case.

It is a violent snow storm, equal to any that has happened this winter. I am quite at leisure to enjoy my feast. It has had one hasty reading, and I am going to give the whole another, more deliberately. A lad who draws the highest prize in a lottery feels no richer than I do, with my secret hoard. As to my discretion in the use of it, I will, as soon as it clears up, go to Boston, and with our excellent friend George Cabot, who is the keeper of my conscience and judgment, endeavor to frame a mature plan of conduct. I abstain now from all comment.

As Randolph is no federalist, is too Virginian, and perhaps too ambitious to be any sooner trusted than the other jacobin competitors for power, why, I ask, should the federal orators be silent? It is no doubt right to let them, the Jacobins, get by the ears. Too prompt a declaration on any question might be a cause for some weak democrats to vote worse than they otherwise would. Yet I confess I have strong doubts whether the Feds do not carry their reserve to an extreme. A party exists by acting, and dies by wholly forbearing to act. Feeble as the Feds are in numbers, they are strong in talents, formidable by their virtues, and chance now arms them with the weapons of John Randolph & Co. I decide nothing on the point, but I hope and trust it is considered by our worthy friends, in both houses, that the crisis is favorable to popular impression; that Quincy, Dana, and Broom in the House, you, Mr. Bayard, &c., in the Senate, by stating facts with their just inferences, can make that impression. I see not why the

Feds should not let the nation know that they still exist, and that they are still faithful to their old principles. They may take their own peculiar federal ground, and if converts should not be made from democracy, let them bear it in mind, federalism in New England needs exhortation, consolation, and encouragement incessantly. I would not be impertinent with Mr. Bayard, but I have no objection to your suggesting these ideas to him. With my old friend Tracy I need no apologies for hinting what comes uppermost.

Fit and proper as I think it to use exertions, I nevertheless concede the point, that the splitting of the jacobin party bodes no good to our cause. There is no return, in political affairs, from vice to virtue, from the wrangles of jacobinism to the peace of federal order. Worse men, if they are to be found, will succeed Jefferson; meaner I think will not. If rogues must rule us, it is luck to obey knowing ones. I will write to you soon, but I have little to export to pay for my late valuable imports.

Yours with unfeigned esteem, &c.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, December 5, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — I hope you and good Mrs. Quincy were snug and safe at Washington, before the snow storm of the 3d. The wind was violent, but so much rain followed, and so warm weather, that we have little snow on the ground.

I have just read the second number of Decius, ascribed to Mr. Randolph, and I am deceived if he will not find that he writes himself down. His attack on the Feds is not only illiberal, not only unworthy of a man of sense, for it gives vent to vulgar prejudices, but I confess it sinks him exceedingly as a man of spirit. It attacks the foes of Jefferson, as a propitiatory merit to beg his own acquittal. He

even praises Fox for being the friend of the illustrious American Chief Magistrate. No enemy of Mr. Randolph can desire to see him sink lower than to crawl at the foot of Jefferson's throne, and to flatter the man he has offended, and still despises. Thus it is that Burr disgraced himself, that Callender drowned himself, and Bonaparte went to war again, just at the time when Jefferson needed exactly such good luck to escape disgrace. And now Randolph, his enemy, voluntarily becomes, nay publicly petitions to become, his footstool. I always doubted his judgment, and never could get so far as to have a doubt about his wild, irregular ambition. But I did suppose he had spirit, that often felt when it should not, and always when it should. As I take his word for his sentiments and intentions, I am obliged to put him back again, for the present, on the list of ordinary demagogues, where he placed himself, and the public placed him, on the trial of Judge Chase. He rose by brevet last winter — (that is not the right phrase) — he acted as a commander in chief, but his commission must be made out as ensign, unless he displays more independence in every sense of the word. I greatly desire to know how the play will open, on the Washington boards, and what part Mr. R. will take.

I do not hesitate to give you my first impressions, because I do not cherish my claim to wisdom in foretelling what Congress will do, believing as I do with all imaginable civism and duty, that Congress knows as little of its own plans as I do.

Lord Lauderdale will eat his Christmas pie in London; but whether Bonaparte will eat his in Berlin, is not so certain. He brags as if he felt a little afraid to play the risky game of war once more, and the King of Prussia is no doubt ten times as much afraid as he. He has more reason.

Your friend, &c.

Please show the other side to Colonel Pickering.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, Thursday, December 11, 1806.

DEAR MR. QUINCY, — I received by the mail from Boston the favor of yours, covering the message. It had appeared in the Boston paper of Tuesday, which I have not seen; and unless the mail be corrected, I must ask you to send me the Boston news. We have here three mails a week, called the great mail, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, which do not stop at our little office, and on each of the other days, a little mail, which regularly fails to bring the papers in season. If my dear Seaver did but know how the poor people's bowels yearn in vain for the Chronicle, he would pity our case, and would use his influence with Granger to get "the procedure corrected." So much for the grievances of Lilliput.

The message is insipid. It is pompous inanity. While he thinks gunboats will do instead of a navy, and that a little more in the way of doing nothing to fortify our harbors will answer for the seaports, where God's chosen people are not to be found, and five hundred cavalry instead of an army, he gravely pronounces that the liberation of our revenue is "of all objects the most desirable." There is something as despicable as unsound in this sentiment. One would imagine the message was a report from George Deblois to the town of Boston, about the management and expenditures of the almshouse. The scale of his message is graduated below the politics of Sancho's government of Barataria, and is really below it. For Mr. Jefferson only takes care of his popularity, which forbids him to govern at all. The day of judgment for nations comes while sinners live. Experience will yet whip out of our flesh what folly has bred in our bone. All our notions, our prejudices, our very vanity that makes other nations fight, are unsocial and make us base and sordid. If we remain so, we cannot defend our liberty, and if we get a master, he will try to raise our spirit, because, with such slaves, he could not maintain his usurpation. I make these remarks because I seem to

see the John Winthrops and Deacon Tudors as the men chiefly relied on to applaud the sentiments of our illustrious Cæsar. While it (the message) boasts of our overflowing treasury, the political horizon is allowed to be overcast and threatening; and, to make amends for unwelcome tidings, he doubles his usual dose of slang.

Let us, however, be just to this man. Is he not a very good chief for us? Would any man, who was free from the lowest passions and prejudices of the lowest mob, manage our affairs with success? Our nation must act out its character, or rather act without one, till forty years of adversity have taught all those who can learn, and exterminated those who will not. Colonel Burr is not, I suppose, formidable, but his designs show the presumption of democratic reliance on our cobweb ties for lions.

I restrain my propensity to preach. I am one of your congregation, and dutifully wait for information, which you know the southern members biennially distribute in circulars.

Yours, &c.

TO RICHARD PETERS, PHILADELPHIA.

Dedham, December 14, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — A conscience is a plague to a man — and yet a man is the worse for having none. I read your letter with pleasure. I thought it kind and friendly, and richly full of good matter. I could make a book upon it, if I had a pen like General Heath, whose orders, I have been told, were very voluminous. But though a ready scribbler, I am no author — I shall never rise to the honor of being bound in calf or sheepskin. There is so much matter in your letter I could not in ten days decide which of its topics first claims an answer.

I am no royalist, Anglo-American, nor tory. I only ask how our government is to be supported; — and I answer by

miracle. The miracle of virtue, that loves others first, then one's-self.

All this I admire, and I am willing to say, when the proof comes, *ecce signum*. It will never come. Our mistake is in supposing men better than they are. They are bad, and will act their bad character out. The federalists are good for nothing to govern — worth every thing to check those who do. Behold, here is my political creed! I like the pretty business of hoping, but I see very little foundation for it. The rogues may fall out, but the honest men will never come by their right in consequence.

I now resume my first position: a conscience is a plague to a man — for I liked your letter very much. I thought it kind and friendly, deserving my grateful and speedy acknowledgment. It furnished, too, the most copious theme for scribbling, and that is another thing I like. Nevertheless I have shamefully delayed acknowledging my obligation; and, say what you will on the subject, I say beforehand I deserve reproof, and my impertinent, officious conscience is very forward to make it.

You wish to see a navy; but are you not satisfied with gunboats, which candid judges, I presume, would pronounce not to be much worse than good for nothing? The system of our rulers is anti-commercial, and yet their noisiest supporters are in cities.

I pray you offer my ever affectionate regards to my friend Mr. Rundle. Mrs. R. will readily know a geranium from an oleander; but I have been afraid my sagacious friend would make some mistakes about his potatoes and cucumbers. I have heard of a city farmer who turned his beans down again when he thought they sprouted wrong end uppermost.

With sentiments of respect and esteem,

I am, dear sir, yours.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, December 20, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — From you and Colonel Pickering I have the message and the Spanish papers. The message plainly tells us we are not to have protection. I am ignorant what gunboats are good for. Yet they are now most clearly adopted in lieu of a navy; and troops are not to be raised, because they are never to be employed while an overflowing treasury will afford tribute, and tribute upon tribute. Your non-importation act is, I perceive, suspended by the House, and no doubt by the Senate. The occasions will recur to expose the folly and impotence of that measure. It appears to me right for the Feds to seek or make the occasions, and use them. Efforts are not lost, though baffled. Our people argue badly, but they feel, and the baseness of the policy of administration ought to be exposed. The repeal of the salt tax is an abominable proposal. Of all our taxes, it is the easiest collected, the article very cheap, of universal consumption, great bulk, and capable of yielding, in times of urgency, a great supply to government. It ought to be resisted by the most forcible, yet temperate appeal, to the boasted good sense of the country.

Burr is still the theme of conversation. Eaton's narrative creates surprise, and though I am far from thinking it false, I can scarcely allow it to be accurate. Burr was in no condition for such a project, and if he had been, would he have opened himself so indiscreetly to Eaton? Does the disclosure awaken no fears of the future politics of the transalpine states? Will not our imperial mistress, Virginia, allow that her chicken[1] will one day peck her eyes out? If Bonaparte demolishes the King of Prussia, Mr. Jefferson must redouble his assiduities, to please our future master.

You will have with you our excellent friends. Pray give my regards to J. P. Davis and the rest.

I am, dear sir, yours, truly.

[1] Kentucky.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, December 22, 1806.

My Dear Sir, — This being our Forefathers' day, I could wish I was in good plight to celebrate it with many of the worthies at Vila's, in Boston. I hope the day will be ever memorable with a posterity worthy of such ancestors. Still, I confess, it is matter of regret that the celebration has been used for high party purposes, and has been charged with degenerating into a bacchanalian feast. Our excellent friend, Isaac P. Davis, has exerted himself much to give it *eclat.* By separating this celebration from party, and giving it, as it deserves, a serious and even religious turn, it might be diffused over New England. If, in the course of events, a second Burr should divide our empire by the Alleghany, (the present Burr will not succeed in it,) the nationality of New England will be a security against the disasters of such a convulsion. When peace opens the door for foreign intrigue, and the growth of the tramontane states shall make them "feel power and forget right," (it may be ten years for this progress to be completed,) another Burr would probably succeed, and our fifteen-million paradise would go with the mountaineers. Would not Virginia tremble at such a foresight of things? Her cheap defence of the nation would then seem to be no defence.

I perceive by the message, which you was kind enough to inclose in a pamphlet, (date of your letter, 3d December,) that Mr. Jefferson's system is now fixed. The sea is to have no defence but gunboats and non-importation acts; and our territory is to be made safe by paying tribute. He would not arm on seeing a speck of war in the horizon. What a trap for popularity with the basest of our vulgar! If force is not to be prepared before it is wanted, when can it be prepared? To be always prepared, is the surest way to be long at peace. To free our treasury from claims upon it, is "of all things the most desirable," says Mr. Jefferson. To be free within, enjoying justice, and respected without our limits, so as to have liberty and justice with the greatest

possible degree of security for their lasting long, seems to me a more desirable object.

No matter for the trading cities — "the great sores" — provided God's chosen people, many of whom have renounced him, or are ignorant of his government and revealed will, are protected and paid five or six times as much for riding into the woods and scalping some old squaws, as a regular force would cost. This is economy; this is equality. I see no reason for the forbearance of the federalists. Why should they not expose, in speeches, the tricks of administration?

I am flattered by your letter, because it says, a little unexpectedly I confess, that my correspondence would not be irksome. Our commerce is quite unequal, as I have almost nothing to export of any value, in comparison with what I receive.

I am an invalid, moping obscurely in the country, and grieving that the King of Prussia is probably unkinged before this date.

Isaac P. Davis and some other very good men of Boston, are with you, and will often see you. They will come back fuller than all the newspapers with the secret history of our American St. Cloud.

Yours, with the highest regard, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, January 1, 1807.

My Dear Sir, — The President, by delaying the recommendation of the suspension of Nicholson's act,[1] till the world had been edified with his message, seems to have chosen, on plan, that the molasses for the mob should be unmingled with acid. The fools in Congress seem too to be instructed to boast that Great Britain has yielded to the

[1] The non-importation act.

mere show of this tremendous weapon of non-intercourse. How far that nation consults her dignity, or feels herself pressed by her situation as a belligerent, to permit this mistake to be made, I know not. I should think she would insist, as a preliminary, that the act be repealed, or, better yet for her, leave the United States to the sad and shameful experience of its operation. As matters now are, party will teach, and fools will believe, on the evidence of experience, that we have bullied her into concessions. Whether Tracy's motion for papers be perfectly correct, pending a negotiation, I have not considered. Great Britain, I should imagine from the little that I know, is more afraid of our hostility than she need be. The United States could not be forced into a war with her, until Bonaparte has so nearly conquered this great rival, that there would be no danger in it for the United States to coalesce with him. Now Fox is dead, and Lord Grenville resumes, I suppose, the control he had in Pitt's day, I should calculate on a greater degree of indifference for a treaty with the United States. Fortune seems to be almost as much a friend to Jefferson as to Bonaparte. The depressed fortunes of Great Britain keep her surprisingly tame under insult, and eager to coax us into a reconciliation. The sad fate of Prussia will still more subdue her pride, and the sagacious ignorance of our country will cry, Behold the fruit of Jefferson's vigorous counsels! Behold what means the Feds always possessed but never dared to use!

No strong impression can be made on national opinion. There is apathy enough to blunt the edge of Demosthenes' rhetoric. He would be so far from changing our faith, he would not command our attention. But though great strokes are not to be struck, I still rely on the effect of repetition. Our lazy ignorance would yield to an assault perpetually renewed. I cannot, therefore, see why the Feds should be so very shy, as they are, about speaking out. I cannot see why a strong yet temperate manner, like that of the best sort of English parliamentary opposition in 1773 and 1774, should not be tried, and tried over again, with an incessant repetition. Why should not Dana move in the House to expose abuses, and to tear, if possible, the veil with which adminis-

tration choose to hide their doings? It might fail of effect. It would not make power change hands, nor, if I may use a low expression, make power wash its hands, but it would help to retard its progress. It would fortify that declining power of control that the Feds throughout the Union yet possess, and which cannot be lost without losing the last hope of mitigating the despotism to which we are devoted. All former reasons for forbearance are now at an end. Randolph yields to a master whom he finds too firm in his seat to be lifted out of it; and it is clear that his success would be no triumph for our party. Efforts are not lost, and I wish the Feds would make them. The discords of our masters can only charge our masters not to restore our power. Why then suppress the voice of truth and patriotism in Congress.

If Burr has the ambition of a Lord Clive, I think it full as likely, as his, to take the road to speculation as insurrection. I cannot believe that Burr is going to set up the standard of civil war. Has not he some land scheme beyond the Mississippi? If I understand the papers from Wilkinson, it is not the Spaniards that flinch. They are to patrol the disputed ground, &c. With great regard and esteem, Yours, truly.

I am afraid Russia will be reduced to nullity, so that Bonaparte will conquer alone, or take her into partnership with him to share the Ottoman Empire.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, January 1, 1807.

My Dear Sir, — It would be a violation of the rules of evidence to deny that V....., S....., and C..... are as great fools as they pretend to be, in regard to the bullying effect of our non-intercourse law. This sort of candor would, however, be excessive towards B.....; for, if I

mistake not the character of the man, it would take him a whole age of probation, and perhaps purgatory, to rise in the scale of reformation so high as sincerity in vice. I make no doubt the folly of that impotent measure will be hid from the eyes of our wise multitude, who have eyes, but see not. How Great Britain can, and why she would, concede the question of neutral rights, is incomprehensible. It seems as if that point would be to be settled with France yet; for, if Prussia falls, and Russia is disarmed, how long will it be before Great Britain will be done for? I expect yet to see Mr. Jefferson a prefect of Bonaparte. He is one of his Legion of Honor already. Is that permitted by our Constitution? I cannot imagine that Burr has means for any thing great as a public enemy. Neither France, Spain, nor Great Britain would furnish those means; and the western country will not be ripe for such a man as Burr these ten years.

To repeal any existing tax is absurd enough. Certainly we want ships and fortifications, and lessening our treasure must delay the extinction of our debt. "To free the revenue is, of all objects, the most desirable!" How loose, how incorrect is Mr. Jefferson! The salt tax is one of the best, the least felt, and most unexceptionable. Is it not pledged for the public debt? Why should not such schemes to get popularity be exposed? Who fitter for that task than you? And why not seize that occasion to urge the necessity of a navy, and the fitness of applying as much as the salt revenue receipts yearly to the construction of ships of the line, (especially as, in case of the neutrality of the British navy, our only mode of resistance would be to meet an invading foe half seas over,) that we might equip ships enough to destroy such expeditions? A navy is popular, and the public is not quite blind to its danger, if Great Britain should cease to fight Bonaparte. The employment it would create in our seaports, the call for timber, &c., &c., in those parts of the country where the salt tax is felt, or pretended to be felt, would afford good heads of discourse; and as the ground is solid, as true patriotism calls for a navy, as Mr. Jefferson means to get taxes from us to spend in the woods, the public attention might be a little engaged.

I am delighted with yours of the 21st, just received. It delineates character in a most interesting manner. I shall read it over till I am sure I lose no part of the portrait you have drawn.

What do you think of the frequent observations in the Repertory, in reference to their effect, good or bad, or no effect, on the once expected division of the party? Will the man alluded to be made better or worse by them? I do not believe that vanity ever wears so thick a mail as to be unwounded by merited sarcasm, however invariably this may be pretended. I see, too, that Bidwell begins to crow again like a dunghill cock, as if he had forgotten his former beating. Will R.[1] let him crow?

I pray you offer my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Quincy, and believe me, with regard and esteem,

Yours, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, January 12, 1807.

My Dear Sir, — The man who never flatters cannot avoid furnishing the occasions for his friends to flatter themselves. Indeed their being his friends will furnish one. Your kind wishes for my health, in your favor of New Year's day, will afford another. I was much gratified by the perusal of the other parts of your letter, but that part was not the least pleasing. In return, I will wish that fortune may serve you as well as you serve your country, and that one of your rewards and enjoyments may be, to see our country escape from the perils to which it is blind, and the administration to which it is now partial.

You describe our dangers and disgraces with so just a discernment of their causes, and with so much feeling for the public evils that will be their consequences, that I am ready to acquit former republics from a good deal of the

[1] Randolph.

reproach that has survived their ruin — the reproach of wanting sense to see it, when it was obvious and near. Probably, however, we shall yet find evidence enough in the works of their great writers, to prove that the wise and good among their citizens did foresee their fate, and would have resisted it, if they could; but that a republic tends, experience says, irresistibly towards licentiousness, and that a licentious republic, or democracy, is of all governments that very one in which the wise and good are most completely reduced to impotence. Such men no more deserve the reproach that their republics fall, than that ships are cast away at sea; or, if I may drop all high metaphor and speak like a farmer, that a fence falls when it is supported by nothing but white birch stakes. It is the nature of these to fail in two years; and a republic wears out its morals almost as soon as the sap of a white birch rots the wood.

And are we not fated to have our present chief the longer on account of his inefficiency? His whole care is to be where he is, and to do nothing to risk his place. Unless great public disasters get the multitude angry with this do-nothing policy, they will like it exceedingly. The chiefs of party, of course, cannot get a handle to turn him out; and their inducement to do it is always least, when the squad of the party that is secretly opposed to him is the most clearly convinced of his imbecility. It is not contempt, it is the dread of a really able man at the head of a hostile party that rouses all the fierceness of political competition.

It is natural to ask, whether we are not hastening to the time when public disasters will make him obnoxious. It seems to me probable, his election will happen first. Of course our country must remain unprepared, and be ruined, if it please God to permit the British navy to belong to Bonaparte. The Assyrian will tread us down like the mire of the streets. I have read the tenth chapter of Isaiah, to which you refer me, and I think it strikingly applicable to the French and to the United States. As, however, the British navy may resist for several years, we may be permitted, without interruption, to finish our destruction ourselves. When I note Crowninshield's anti-bank scheme, Gallatin's report to refund, or unfund, the debt, and the

schemes for amending the Constitution to death, I am ready to suppose that our Jacobins will be in at the death before our French conquerors.

I am a little less disposed than most persons to throw all the blame, of delaying to resist France, on the king of Prussia. Last fall I stated, that unless the coalition would consent to make him great, they had no right to expect to make him hostile to Bonaparte; that small powers could not now exist in Europe independent; that Prussia would be ruined by France, if he joined against her, and the coalition failed of its object; that he would as certainly be ruined by his allies, if the coalition succeeded, for he would be little and they great; and that the foresight of this manifest danger would justify him, if he insisted, as a *sine qua non*, to be made as potent at least as Austria; that he ought to have Hanover, Saxony, Hesse, and Holland added to his kingdom, indemnifying in money, or other territory, the ousted princes; and thus he would be placed to fight France with only the Rhine for a barrier; but I added, that probably neither of the parties to the coalition would agree to his aggrandizement.

It was not long after the disasters of Austria before the king of England, as elector of Hanover, declared to the king of Prussia, that in no possible event would he alienate his German dominions. Such narrow views, such stiffness at a time which required yielding to a friend, lest he should have to yield to a foe, still appear to me to merit the reproach of ruining the coalition, and excluding the king of Prussia when he was willing to reënforce it. His late manifesto alludes darkly to some of these facts. His gallant conduct to meet Bonaparte in the field of battle was probably well and maturely considered beforehand; yet it has turned out wrong; for if he had led his army to join the Russians, the battle would have been yet to fight, and the event might be different. It seems as if Frederick thought a defensive system a poor one against the French. In that, no doubt, he was right; still I wish he had waited for the Russians.

I think I have formerly communicated to you some reflections I had made, on the causes of the steady superiority maintained in war by the French armies, and that I ascribed

them to their superiority in numbers, in cavalry, and in artillery. From hence it ensues that fortified towns are of little significance, and small arms of much less than formerly. On each of these heads I could dilate, but I think it needless to you. But the consequence of this real superiority is, that the defensive system is no longer to be trusted. Nations could formerly spin out a war, and tire down a foe. To conquer was, of course, next to impossible. Since, however, the experience of the French system has evinced that absolute conquest is no longer an improbable event of a contest with France, it becomes obvious that nations, who would be safe, must get the sort of force that gives to France this tremendous superiority. Relying no longer on a frontier of fortified towns with strong garrisons, and a weak army of observation in the field, they must now have numbers, cavalry, and artillery superior to the invader, or make up their minds to submit to him. A navy, if we had one, might hinder this invader from coming over. But if he comes, he will be our master, if we have nothing but militia with small arms to oppose his march. Indeed his march would be a quiet procession, through the centre of the States, from Norfolk to New York, little disturbed, and not at all obstructed by myriads of popping militia. Such an enemy could get horses by stripping Long Island, the eastern shore, and the coast of South Carolina and Georgia. Our patriots too would, no doubt, supply them for a good price. The light artillery they would bring with them; and as the French stow men as thick in their ships as the Guinea traders do their negro slaves, they could bring over fifty thousand troops and twenty thousand dismounted dragoons. What could we do but join Duane in lamenting that we had so long suffered anglo-federal presses to provoke the great nation? *Apropos* of Duane, how audaciously insolent he is on that subject!

These are my grounds for showing that, unless we prepare, and on a great scale, we must submit when our English defenders give out.

I really wish you would examine this perhaps obscure sketch of the grounds of my military notions, to convince Mr. Giles how defenceless we are, and how fallacious are

his popular ideas. The sing-song of Bunker Hill Yankee heroes will not do against the French. They understand their trade. An inferior army, even of regulars, would be exposed, would be sure to have its flank turned; and thus a victory would be won without a chance to fight. With a numerous cavalry, there would be no chance for running away. Is any country, then, more conquerable than the United States, from New York southward? Even our Yankee land, though abounding in strong posts, would be destitute of men and means to occupy and maintain them. My idea would be, that the utmost energies of the United States should be called forth to equip a powerful fleet of ships of the line, and that salt duties, interior and direct house taxes should be resumed or augmented, to array a considerable body of artillerists, and a military school of engineers, &c., and regiments enough to supply officers; the complement of men to be small. On the whole, a less number than twelve thousand I should think unsafe to trust to. If any fears of the danger to liberty should arise from such an army, have a select militia, three times as numerous, of yeomanry, encamped yearly in such numbers as would teach discipline, and let that be perfect. To that end, there must be martial law in the camp.

I well know that all this is moonshine, and that embarrassments in executing so great a plan would arise. The people would think it madness; the federalists would be as much afraid of arming as the democrats. I know too, as a consequence of all this, that we fall when the navy of our unthanked champion is withdrawn. Fifty thousand real soldiers might make us safe; and we might have, and ought to have, a navy to block up Cadiz, Brest, and Toulon, whenever England makes peace, and our danger from France should make it necessary.

I will ask of Mr. Cabot the perusal of your letter to him.

Yours, &c.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, January 27, 1807.

DEAR MR. QUINCY, — You great men in Congress love to banter us poor farmers. The style of the court, we have always heard, is very flattering; otherwise I should say, you are too civil by half, when you profess yourself my pupil.

Abstract truths still appear to us at home to be truths; but their application depends upon circumstances, which we cannot know at all, or not in season for advising you, who are on the spot. I am ready therefore, with, I believe, nine tenths of the men whom you too modestly think well informed on the subjects that pass before your honorable body, to approve whatever you do and say, because you think fit to do and say it. I really felt impressed with the judicious manner of your opposition to the repeal of the salt tax; and I not only honored your spirit, which so small a minority renders the more conspicuous, but I thought it politic, if you had only cared for reputation, to brave such a majority. The spirit of the country is not very high, but it is higher than the administration.

What you do and say is very right, for we, the people, yield to every strong impression upon our minds. Therefore, what your party neglects to do and say seems to me very wrong, for it leaves us to the impression of the clumsy arts of your adversaries. They do what ought not to be done, they neglect what ought to be done, and all seems right to us, the people, so long as you good men in Congress forbear to expose the facts. In Great Britain, opposition is methodical in its way. Every thing is done on plan, and that plan is to show the incapacity and tricks of administration. Why is this task left, and left exclusively, to Randolph? Why should not the Feds speak out, *quasi* Feds? Why should they permit their name and principles, and the memory of both, to perish? Either Bonaparte must kill our liberty, or faction will kill it. But states have an hereafter in this world. In our future state, which may not be five years off, perhaps not two, the influence of the Feds to mitigate a tyranny may be great, though it is found little to

prevent its occurrence. The peculiar federal ground should be forever notorious with our citizens. As matters are, the Feds seem to me too much merged in the other parties. Popular topics are ever at hand with those who find fault. Your own good speech on fortifications is an example. It made an impression, and the impression yet remains. The objects of the administration are mean and personal. The people want some of the advantages of good government; and when there is no question about the burden of taxes, the denial of those advantages affords aliment to that malecontent spirit, which is unappeasable in all republics. But the silence of the federalists as a party, and as a peculiar party, still adhering to *Washington* principles, nearly loses all the influence arising from all these various sources. I will thank you to offer my respectful salutations to Mr. Theodore Dwight, and ask his reflections on the plan of the campaign for the Feds. He is a man of resource, and well knows the avenues to New England minds.

It is certainly better that Randolph should expose the wretched policy of our Solomons, than that it should be left unnoticed. But while his course should be left free, why should not the Feds fastidiously pursue their own, taking care to let it appear that it is different from his? You good men in Washington are not to be lectured by anybody, and I feel as little disposed to take the chair of lecturer as any man alive. You will not do me the injustice to interpret my suggestions otherwise than I wish you should. The entertaining matter and vivacity of manner in your letters extort from me the prosing returns I make you. I wish to see the federal grounds displayed, and become as public as the public roads. All eyes are turned to Washington. There federalism concentres its deputies, and thence should emanate the facts, documents, and arguments for us all. It is true you are a minority, and what you ask for will be refused; but it will nevertheless remain a notorious fact that you ask, and you are not tongue-tied, but you can surely make the reasons why you ask universally known. Great caution, no doubt, great concert and great ability are necessary; and a few able men can furnish all these requisites. I declare to you, I fear federalism will not only die, but all

remembrance of it be lost. As a party, it is still good for every thing it ever was good for; that is to say, to cry "fire" and "stop thief," when Jacobinism attempts to burn and rob. It never had the power to put out the fire, or to seize the thief.

Nor should too much maiden modesty be affected about causing your speeches to be carefully corrected and printed. It is respectful towards the public to expose reasons, as if we could comprehend or would regard them. S. H. Smith is too partial to be trusted with that business.

I am glad Randolph's mouth is at last open.

Your friend.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, February 3, 1807.

My Dear Sir, — As soon as I learned where your salt speech could be found in print with any correctness, I took measures to get it republished. It is in the Repertory of this day, and is, I say it without compliment, an ornament to its columns. I am as well satisfied with what you do not say, but only hint, as if you had said it in form. Your argument is sound, and the subject is presented in the right point of view. No man seldomer says flattering things to his friends than I do; and if I had waited a week after reading your speech, I should have been more stingy of praise. Having just read it, I cannot wholly suppress my warmth of approbation. Let me repeat that you should not be too modest about getting your speeches into print correctly. It is the public that is argued with; that public that always pronounces its judgment, and seldom condescends to give its attention; that is almost always wrong in the hour of deliberation, and right in the day of repentance. Federalism is allowed to have little to do with deliberation; and I am far from certain that popular repentance is often accompanied with saving grace. We are not so truly sorry for the sin, as for its bad success. To get people to think

right therefore, either first or last, is not the most hopeful undertaking in the world. But federal good sense is never to guide measures. Archimedes might calculate the force of the wind, but could not prevent its blowing. Now, though argument will never turn the weathercock, it may prove how it points. That power, which your adversary can use in spite of you, is checked by your efforts. If he exerts all his force, and you all yours, his force is reduced to the degree in which he surpasses you, and in that degree you may not be liable to very serious injury. Federalism is not a sword, nor a gun; it is not wings, but a parachute. In this sense, the good men in Congress should be on the alert.

I feel assured that we are to be subjugated by Bonaparte; and I have a curiosity to know how Randolph and the knowing ones can sit as easy as the fools do, and see him hastening to snatch from their hands the power they are so ready to contend among themselves about. I saw in the Repertory, of last week, a long piece, of five or six columns, on the causes of the French military superiority, and on the facility of their conquest of the United States, unless we prepare on a great scale. Whether such discussions produce any effect, I know not; but if they do not produce any, it must be because our noisy liberty-men are eager for power, and perfectly indifferent about the fall of the country from its boasted independence. J. R.'s boast, that he never reads the newspapers, is a shrewd sign that he studies them. I hope his real politics are better than Varnum's, whose ignorance blinds him, or than Jefferson's, whose fears make him a slave. But if J. R. was disposed ever so heartily to urge preparations, he could not prevail to have any made. The force of primary popular notions would control Lord Chatham, if he was our premier. I often dare to think our nation began self-government without education for it. Like negroes, freed after having grown up to man's estate, we are incapable of learning and practising the great art of taking care of ourselves. We must be put to school again, I fear, and whipped into wisdom.

Nobody here seems to care a cent about Burr's plan. They think him desperate and profligate; but they concern themselves very little about his managing his own affairs in

his own way, without too much of Mr. Jefferson's regulation. The riots on account of Selfridge are over, but the effect on the popular mind is not obliterated. Our General Court seems to be nearly as ready for revolution as that in Pennsylvania, which McKean lately resisted with success.

On the whole, if Bonaparte should not come soon, we shall ruin ourselves before he gets here; and if he comes, he will ruin us. I like usurpation better than conquest. It is better to lie in purgatory than in hell.

It was my design to write you a short letter, but I cannot stop my pen when I would, and if I have tired you two pages back, charge it, I pray you, to my infirmity.

Your friend, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, February 4, 1807.

My Dear Sir, — The immeasurable ambition, and equal profligacy of Colonel Burr, have created no surprise, nor have I doubted that his desperate situation would urge him upon desperate measures, if any chance of success in any such should offer. But my surprise still continues, because I cannot see that any chance of success could have flattered him. Burr I supposed shrewd and intelligent, of all men the least likely to mistake peevish discontents among the western people for deep disaffection, or to take other men, like Truxton, for instance, to be Aaron Burrs. I supposed he might err in daring too much; I little thought he would hazard every thing by trusting too soon, and opening his designs to men who, everybody could have sworn, would reject his proposals. The men who are destitute of any virtue, are generally too much in want of character, to have influence; — and to mislead the men of virtue, two things must, I think, concur. The prospect must be such as to enable him to corrupt them, by their virtues, which is as sure a way to corrupt *them*, as to tempt bad men by their passions. There was nothing in Burr's scheme but rebel-

lion, without plausible pretexts. The next way to gain men is so to contrive the project, that the total loss of character should not be the penalty. It is too much to expect that the chance of power or land should reconcile Truxton, or even Wilkinson, to live execrated by all men in the United States at least. Instant disgrace is a condition that would spoil any offer with all the ordinary rogues, who as seldom act steadily upon bad principles, as good men upon those of virtue.

However, nobody cares for Burr or his conspiracy. I am struck with it, to see how little the hopes and fears of our part of the public are interested. Curiosity is hungry, but our patriotism seems unconcerned. The separation of the western country has not appeared to me a probable event. Democracy acts by the physical force of the many, and the *vis major* will keep the whole territory indivisible. Insurrection will either conquer or be conquered, and division will thus end in unity. Foreign events may work great interior changes. We approach the term when they will begin. France is gaining the dominion over us as well as Europe, and Bonaparte may hinder licentiousness from undoing us, by acquiring the mastery here first. He will not then allow anybody to play the oppressor but himself and his subs. My heart sinks at the prospect. We are abject and base, people as well as government, and nothing could save us but energy and magnanimity. We have none of these. Our great democracy cannot remain as it is. *Ipsa moles nocet.* It must ferment, if Bonaparte should let it alone, and fermentation is an agent that must change and may destroy the mass. Indeed I consider the whole civilized world as metal thrown back into the furnace, to be melted over again. If we should lose our dross, our negro population, and our licentious spirit, we shall come out of the furnace much less in bulk than we go in with. Futurity, however, like the blue ether of the sky, is impenetrable without seeming to be so. There appears to be nothing to stop our vision, but there is nothing to guide it. Indeed, I think in both cases we can see most, by shutting our eyes. Providence will dispose of us, and if our destiny should be no better than our deserts, we shall have no great consolation in the prospect.

Supposing that you see the Repertory regularly, I have not sent it to you. The last week a long essay of five columns appeared in it, to show the causes of the French superiority, and the facility with which they could get the upperhand over our militia. You will see other pieces in that paper, written apparently in the hope of rousing the people, and alarming the administration, which you will say is no great proof of the writer's discernment. I remember Tracy used to say of the Jacobins, they were hell-hardened sinners. If the government saw the danger, the people would not let them provide against it. But I have a curiosity to know whether Giles, Randolph, and Jefferson himself are blind to it. Whether the latter confides in Bonaparte, or, if he should attempt invasion, whether he thinks a militia any defence. All these men are talkers, and I should suppose open themselves frequently on every subject. Mr. Quincy's speech on the salt tax is a good one, and is much approved. I did not greatly mistake Mr. Dana's character, but somebody must come forward in the House; and for a great speech or two, Mr. D., I should hope, would be found adequate. He is sprightly and witty, though I apprehend, not a great lover of business and drudgery. Your idea of the dejection of Great Britain agrees with mine, though I think not exactly with Mr. Cabot's. He has suggested that they act on a refined plan of policy, to evade rather than to yield the points in dispute. So much evasion, however, looks like real timidity. Our cowards appear to think themselves entitled to brag about the non-intercourse law. When Bonaparte has all Europe, from the Baltic round to the Euxine, in his dominion, I really fear Great Britain will find it difficult, or at least useless, to contend longer. Then we must yield. The insolent threat of the young Frenchman could be executed. We should take monarchy, despotism, fetters, and ignominy better than any people, not excepting the Dutch, that Bonaparte has yet conquered. I ought to have said sooner, that yours of 23d January is received. I make no doubt Truxton is brave and honest.

With esteem and regard, yours, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Dedham, November 6, 1807.

My Dear Sir, — Your favor of the 28th October, covering the message and documents referred to, reached me yesterday somewhat unexpectedly. I had supposed you would not go on to Washington till November. Besides, shut up half my time in a sick chamber, and the other half in my parlor, I am unaffectedly sensible of my insignificance. If, however, you and my worthy friend Mr. Quincy think fit sometimes to send me intelligence, I shall be grateful. I am in the habit of thinking your comments better than the text.

I was disgusted about a fortnight since, on reading, in Ben Russell, a short piece tending to show that Great Britain had the empire of the sea and Bonaparte of the land; that both obtained it by force, which gives them all the rights they have, the one to subjugate the nations, and the other to make and expound the laws of nations. When federal newspapers publish such stuff, are we to wonder at the folly of our people? Have we any security, as long as that folly or worse reigns? I am ready to believe that we, as great boasters as the ancient Greeks, are the most ignorant nation in the world, because we have had the least experience. Fresh from the hands of a political mother, who would not let us fall, we now think it impossible that we should fall. Bonaparte will cure us of our presumption; or, if that task should be left to some other rough teacher, we shall learn at last the art, that is, the habits, manners, and prejudices of a nation, especially the prejudices which are worth more than philosophy, without which I venture to consider our playing government as a sort of free negro attempt. It is probably necessary, that we should endure slavery for some ages, till every drop of democratic blood has been got rid of by fermentation or bleeding. I dread to look forward to the dismal scenes, through which my children are to pass. As every nation has been trodden under foot, ground in a mill, and purged in the fire of ad-

versity, I know not why we should hope for all fair weather and sunshine, for peace and gainful commerce and an everlasting futurity of elysium, before we have lived and suffered as others have done. We seem to expect a state of felicity before a state of probation. Of our six millions of people there are scarcely six hundred who yet look for liberty anywhere except on paper. Excuse me — I am teasing you with a theme as trite and as tragical as the Children in the Wood.

I thank you from my heart for the offer of your correspondence. I am an outside passenger, and should like to know what the gentlefolks are doing inside.

My health is exceedingly tender. While I sit by the fire and keep my feet warm, I am not sick. I have heard of a college lad's question, which tolerably describes my case: "Whether bare being, without life or existence, is better than not to be, or not?" I cannot solve so deep a problem; but as long as you are pleased to allow me a place in your esteem, I shall continue to hold better than "not to be" to be, Dear sir, your friend, &c.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, November 11, 1807.

My Dear Sir, — I am amused to see the embarrassment that your motion for a select committee to state the facts in the affair of the Chesapeake, produced among the governing party. Facts could not be stated truly without exposing the unneutral omissions and commissions of the administration. I may err in my views of things as they pass at such a distance. But I think I see clearly that the Jeffersonians rely on the vague but violent impressions of the people, and will by no means descend to particulars. In this their policy is skilful, for I confess I can discern but little excuse for our government, if the whole truth be laid open. But the speculative opinion, who is in the right or

who in the wrong, will be of no account in the final result. We hate Great Britain, and would fight her if we dared. She would resent our aggressions, if it were not so very inconvenient to herself as it is actually at this time. Her whole soul is engaged in a struggle that concerns us, and we should confess it, if we had any soul. We are, however, either blind to the common danger, or resolved to seek our safety by helping to hasten the worst. Yet it seems to me, that little as Congress affairs look like true wisdom, they look still less like war. I hear no motion for a declaration of war, for bills to confiscate, or to put the non-intercourse law into operation. War does not come from cold blood, and the salamanders have not yet appeared among you. What will J. Randolph do? Will the coming election of a new king keep him in the background.

I cannot write five words worth your reading, but I get all the information worth attending to, from you and Colonel Pickering. Why then should I not contrive to extort replies from you that will furnish it?

Yours, &c.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, November 19, 1807.

Dear Sir, — I consider familiar letters as a substitute for conversation, and that when writing to you, I may pour out my careless effusions to a friend without premeditation on my part, or disappointment on yours. Your letter of the 7th to Mr. Cabot seems to be of a graver cast, and to demand a well-examined answer. Even then, however, when we pretend to think deeply, (I speak for one,) we do but skim off from the surface the old thoughts that have long floated there; — and it is in truth no little proof of their being right, that neither experience nor disputation have expelled them from their post. I make this confession, because I am willing to lay open the source of my opinion on your question, " Whether the federalists should

make motions and speeches, or should wait in silence for the effect of the civil wars that are ready to break out among the Jacobins?" The federal party, which I consider as that of all honest men, would wish to do some things, and to hinder others from being done. Your means for both are not in your votes, but in the influence you may produce on public opinion. That is wrong, but it is not weak. It is blinded in error, but not disarmed by power. Here I observe, that your address to public opinion is not to get power yourselves, but to hinder or control its exercise in the hands of others. You would have the people see what exists, or is impending, not make them choose what they dread, or love those they hate. You would make them love liberty, not you. You cannot make the people federal, because you cannot change their hearts and affections. You could sooner sink the Alleghany to a lake. Though they have partialities and aversions which you cannot control, they have also hopes and fears which you can. They are incurably timorous. They see tempests in every cloud, and goblins in every shadow. Hence I draw this result: Do not disturb the people in their love and hatred, but confine your energies to the display of the public embarrassments and apprehensions. Leave Jefferson to Randolph. Be patient and mild when misrepresented in the House. I shall be sooner at my point, if I say at once, do not irritate; — expose public dangers, and refrain as much as possible from recriminations and individual misconduct in office, Wilkinson, perhaps, excepted. In his case, the popular ground may be taken. I will not pretend to say that you may not be forced to act occasionally in opposition to every one of the ideas I have ventured to suggest. Still, I presume to think your plan, as a party, ought to rest upon them. It is, in a word, that you should do what can be done, not waste your force in trying to do what you cannot. You really love liberty, but the people do not love you, and they never hate you more than when you attack their favorites. These they cherish the more for their disgraces, which they call persecutions for their sakes.

The people dread war, and they will allow you to point out remedies — at least this is what I hope. Even sup-

pose the majority will not receive the truth when you exhibit it, at least the federalists will. You are chosen to do what you can, and if after all, it is unavailing, the party will applaud you, and gather zeal from your arguments. Suppose you sit silent, will it long be possible to hinder the apathy of despair, indeed the chills of dissolution, from pervading the federal body? Will men eagerly vote for others who sit sullen, and will not speak? Feeble as the federal party is, it is inestimable to the public. It is "*Spes ultima Romæ.*" Can liberty have any chance, when it no longer has any friends? Even now, federalism checks, though it cannot govern. It is fitter to check than to rule. And it is all the check we want, when it deters faction from eating us alive. All we ask is, that they would let us exist. It is better to suffer the fatigue of pumping, than to sit sullen till the ship sinks. It is despair that raises among you these doubts as to your exertions. Will not your feelings be contagious, and induce your constituents to dissolve the party? Will not they refuse to make efforts in a cause that you abandon? A party out of action is out of existence. It is a salamander that dies if you refuse fresh fuel, and, what is no less essential, the breath of the bellows. This last, I am afraid you will say, means speeches: I disclaim all evil meanings, and am quite serious. I repeat it, that the chance of liberty will be the worse, probably worse than nothing, if our party be dissolved. How has party subsisted in England? Certainly not by long inaction. Incessantly baffled, yet still assailing, and at last in power for a short time. This is what federalism is not to expect — I think not to desire. By the flight of the emigrants, France instantly fell into the extremes of revolution. Besides, your cautious but ever-vigilant spirit will find or make the opportunities to be useful. A war, if it is hindered, will be hindered by you. If it happens, the first danger will be that the rage of the people will persecute or sacrifice the federalists. It may oppress them in a thousand ways, all intolerable, unless you preserve to us an independent existence. When the people suffer much, (as they will,) if they do not tear us to pieces, (which I confess I think not improbable,) there will be times when they will hear you.

There will yet be many new organizations of party, many overwhelming changes. In resettling affairs, the federalists should be in some force, that is, in credit. They deserve credit for wisdom and patriotism; and in times of fearful adversity, the wise and good are sometimes allowed to advise. It is this eventual employment of party that I would have in view. For instance, if France should propose an alliance, would you wish to have federalism extinct? Would you leave it to John Randolph to awaken New England? I shall be told, that what you all say goes for nothing. Consider whether this is true. If Junius should write in our papers, and genius should sparkle like phosphorus in every column, the pride of every other federal editor would reluct at republishing the performances, and as to the Chronicle, Egis, and Aurora, their readers would never hear of the publication. It is otherwise with speeches in Congress. They are printed in jacobin papers, as well as federal, and all the nation, soon or late, gets the substance of a great debate. By all means renounce that false pride that leaves your argument to be stated by the tools of faction. Write yourselves. It will not, unless too long, be refused by S. H. Smith. Here alone (in Congress) the candle of federal truth shines outside of the bushel, and I think you should see that it is kept lighted, and snuffed on every great dark question. I am far from recommending that you should be verbose, or forever spouting. Quite the reverse. Leave the *petite guerre* to others. Let John Randolph and Smilie have the amusement of the cockpit to themselves. Turn your backs on the combats of the wild beasts in the Amphitheatre, but take your places as Senators in the Forum. In zeal for liberty, no men are your rivals. Show that zeal in its temperance and wisdom. There is not likely to be a want of occasions.

Nothing is to be expected from the civil wars of the faction. You will not hinder their fighting, but you will never profit by their victories. They will conquer for themselves, not you, and the views of the victor, whether Randolph or Varnum, are to be always at variance with yours. Do as our nation ought, and place trust only in yourselves. There is scarcely any great national question in which you would

make efforts in vain. I confess great prudence and many forbearances are necessary. In almost every case, a popular, or, at least, inoffensive aspect can be given to your argument. Invincible popular notions may be let alone, or touched without wounding them. For, I repeat, the skill of the business is to attempt only what is practicable, and some of the popular tenets are false yet sacred, and therefore respectable. I keep writing on, I find, because I did not stop at first to make an exact division of my subject. I hope, however, I have not omitted any thing that I deem material. The illustration and detail of my principal ideas would lead me a great way, but to experienced and able men I have suggested more than enough. I readily allow that you on the spot are the best judges, and I am in the habit of thinking what you do and say is right, because you have said and done it. Yet your question was so general, that I have not thought myself incompetent to discuss it, on account of my distance from the scene of your debates. Brevity, and not a spirit of dogmatism, has made me use the imperative style, which I pray you to excuse. I have scarcely a doubt that I should, if I had a seat in Congress, agree with the majority of the federalists, on any plan of conduct they may adopt. I truly rejoice in the acquisition of talents from Maryland, New York, and Kentucky. I say of you all, "*melioribus utere fatis.*" The very time has come that should make able men active.

From the beginning of my letter, you would expect from me the result of profound meditation. On the contrary, I have written as fast as I could, but not crude new thoughts. I cannot write in any other manner, unless I would submit to a more rigorous toil of thinking than you would expect from a lazy volunteer.

I am, my dear sir, with great esteem and regard,

Yours, most sincerely.

TO JOSIAH QUINCY.

Dedham, December 6, 1807. — Sunday.

My Dear Sir, — I owe you many thanks for your letter of the 26th, because, by writing it, you must have aggravated your nervous headache, because the contents were very interesting, and because I, confined closer than a debtor, am not worth a statesman's correspondence. In this last, I assure you, I have no mock modesty, for I feel and know, that a man out of the world has no right to any account from those who are doing its business. I shall have no miffs if I am left to glean all I can from the occasional bounty of our mutual friends in Boston. Yours to J. P. Davis was in this way communicated to me, to my great satisfaction. But that to Thomas H. Perkins has not been sent out to me.

I have no doubt that Great Britain will forbear to begin war. Yet unwilling as your men of cotton may be to do any thing to make one, it happens that by doing nothing, your wise non-importation law will soon go into effect, and that, we are told, will be taken for war by Great Britain. How correctly this is rumored, of course I know not. Nevertheless from the high tone of your folks, from Mr. Adams's bill, and from the majority against committing the Philadelphia petition, I should draw the inference that Varnum and Co. will not allow that act to be repealed. Although I cannot suppose that Congress wishes for a war, yet nobody but the federalists, and perhaps not all of them, seems to be willing to take, or as yet to urge, the measures that will prevent one. Your dark, but encouraging assurances about the federalists, come very seasonably, just as I am ready to despair of peace. If a British envoy should come, will he negotiate, while war measures are permitted to go into operation? And how can your Solons find a pretext for repealing it now, after having done so much to bind themselves to its support? Great Britain deplores already the shame of the Foxites, whose treaty was made

pendente lege.[1] Will that shame be endured by the Pittites, who then said it was intolerable? As the Boston Exchange is, I am told, pretty calm, I suppose I am ignorant of the grounds of their pacific hopes. The Revenge going and returning *via* France looks like our administration asking leave to negotiate, or assistance to fight. Which is it? or an alliance to draw closer the fraternal bands.

Of your Randolph's sentiments or designs, I know nothing. Yet I expect to see him in a minority. Here I believe there is great dread of a war, yet great apathy about the men or the measures that will bring it about. The repugnance of the southern men to a war appears to me an incompetent security against that dire event. Great resolutions are always brought to maturity unexpectedly to the many. These men of cotton have the same passions with the war party. Their confidence is reposed in the same leading men. They will cheerfully act out any anti-British scheme of policy, which can still be called peace. For to act hostilely was called pacific, when the non-importation law passed. I shall look, therefore, with some apprehension to the 14th December, when the suspension is to expire.

Ever since independence, we have cherished our vanity and nourished our passions. These last have been the fiercer, for being impotent. We have hated those most who oftenest make us feel their impotence. The British have done this, by their searches of our vessels, even while our trade became a monopoly in consequence of the British naval triumphs, as it would be easy to demonstrate. Our cargoes sold well, because the enemies of Great Britain could not sell at all, and we have grown year by year more enraged, because we ascribe to the British vexations the disappointment of our hopes that they would sell still better. We met nobody at sea but Englishmen, and they never failed to exact from us submission, and sometimes sacrifices.

[1] During the short administration of Mr. Fox, a treaty was agreed upon by the negotiators of the two nations at London, substantially like Mr. Jay's treaty. The question of impressment was not disposed of by it, but arrangements were made for the suspension or mitigation of that obnoxious claim. Unfortunately President Jefferson rejected it *instanter*, and thereby threw away the last chance of avoiding war.

Our pride was mortified, and our avarice stript. We cursed their navy, and their maritime law, and wished success to France, and a free sea, that is, that neutrals in every future war should have nothing to do, but take a few hundred dollars freight, instead of fifty per cent. profit on the cargoes. This last item shows how blind we are in our rage, and how little our passions are curbed by our government. On the contrary, the business of the administration has been to find fagots for the bonfire. Thus opinionated and inflamed, our democracy has got loose from every restraint but fear. Our cabinet takes counsel of the mob; and it is now a question, whether the hatred of Great Britain, and the reproach fixed even upon violent men, if they will not proceed in their violence, will not overcome the fears of the maritime States, and of the planters in Congress. The usual levity of a democracy has not appeared in regard to Great Britain. We have been steady in our hatred of her, and when popular passions are not worn out by time, but augment, they must, I should think, explode in war. You are in a situation to judge much better than your eastern friends. I shall rejoice in the success of your efforts, and if, as I expect, your particular merits should be distinguished, I shall rejoice in it with the warmth of a friend.

Yours, truly.

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